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JOSEPH STURGE.

Born August 2 1793 Died May 11 1859

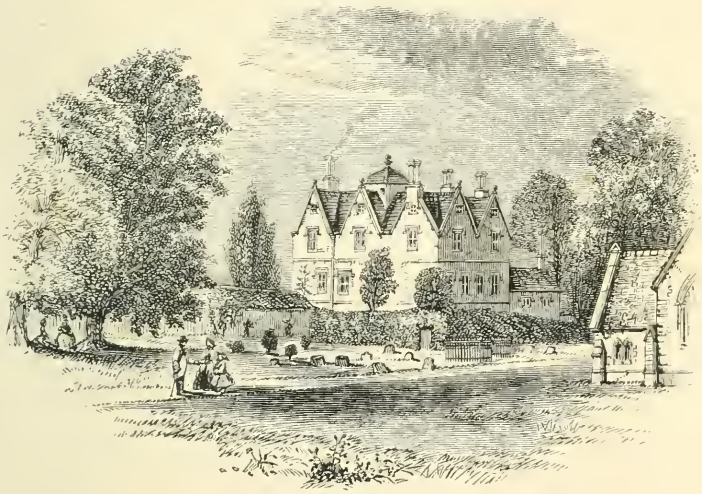
MEMOIRS

OF

JOSEPH STURGE.

BY

HENRY RICHARD.



ELBERTON, THE BIRTHPLACE OF JOSEPH STURGE.

LONDON:
S. W. PARTRIDGE, 9 PATERNOSTER ROW;
A. W. BENNETT, 5 BISHOPSGATE WITHOUT.
1864.

War, and the great in war, let others sing,
Havoc and spoil, and tears and triumphing:
The morning march that flashes to the sun,
The feast of vultures when the day is done:
And the strange tale of many slain for one!
I sing a MAN, amid his sufferings here,
Who watched and served in humbleness and fear;
Gentle to others, to himself severe.

ROGERS.

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PREFACE.

The writer of the following work is by no means convinced that it is an unmixed advantage for the memoirs of an individual to be published very speedily after his death, especially if he were one who had taken any prominent part in connection with public affairs. Still, for the sake of others who may think differently, he cannot but regret the delay that has occurred in the appearance of this volume. But there were many reasons why it was out of his power to accomplish his task sooner. He was so placed that he could only work at it by snatches, in the intervals of official duties always exigent, and sometimes very urgent, which it was impossible for him to pretermit. The work itself, also, proved a much more serious one than he anticipated, when he first acceded to the request with which the family of Joseph Sturge honoured him, to prepare some memorial of the life and labours of his revered and beloved friend. Mr. Sturge was a man whose sympathies were so broad, and whose activities were so varied, that to tell intelligibly the story of his life it was necessary to understand something of most of the leading public events of the last thirty or forty years. Then the materials which came into the writer's hands, out of which to construct the work, were formidable both

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in bulk and quality. He had to read through a correspondence carried on by Mr. Sturge with all sorts of persons, on a great diversity of subjects, extending to between three and four thousand letters, some of them very lengthy, and not a few written in characters almost as difficult to decipher as the Egyptian hieroglyphics. But besides letters there was a large number of other documents and records, including diaries, reports of societies, minutes of committees, pamphlets, newspapers, &c., many of them, indeed, yielding little that was profitable for his purpose, could he only have known their contents without reading them, but none the less consuming a large amount of time in the examination. His labour was, moreover, all the greater because he was determined to restrict the work to one volume, whereas it would have been much easier to have made it two or three. Taking all this into account, he hopes any of Mr. Sturge's friends who may have grown impatient with him will acknowledge that he is entitled to some indulgence for the delay, as well as to some credit for the forbearance with which he has used the mass of materials placed at his disposal.

The author is under obligations to many friends who have assisted him in his work. And first he has a melancholy pleasure in acknowledging the generous kindness of the late Mr. Thomas Pumphrey, who, when he had prepared a valuable paper called 'Brief Recollections of Joseph Sturge,' which he was urged by many to publish, preferred, rather than detract from, by anticipating, any interest supposed to attach to the forthcoming Memoir, to place his production in the hands of the biographer, with full liberty to make any

use of it he might think proper. Of this permission it will be seen he has liberally availed himself, especially in the early part of the volume. It is not without a keen pang of regret he reflects that the book itself will never meet the eye of one who would have opened it with so much of interest and sympathy. But long before it was ready for the press, Mr. Pumphrey had himself passed away to join his friend

'In the blest kingdom meek of Joy and Love.'

To Mr. Robert Charleton of Bristol, Mr. Walter Sturge of the same city, Mr. William White of Birmingham, and the Rev. John Clark of Jamaica, the author begs to express his grateful acknowledgments for important contributions bearing upon different portions of Mr. Sturge's life. The privilege of constant communication with his friend Mr. Joseph Cooper has also been of great value to him, a gentleman whose own labours in the fields of philanthropy have been abundant and long continued. Mr. William Morgan of Birmingham has been most kindly and perseveringly helpful to the biographer, permitting him to draw at will out of his ample stores of information, in reference to most of the public enterprises in which Mr. Sturge was engaged, and in many of which he was his efficient and constant helper. Above all, however, is the author indebted to Mr. Thomas Harvey of Leeds. He cannot express here half of what he feels as to the extent of his obligations to this dear friend, not for material help only, though that has been ample and most important, but for the warm interest, the wise counsel, the delicate sympathy, the generous encouragement, with which he

has sustained and cheered him through the whole undertaking.

The labour of preparing this volume has not been without a rich reward, for it has brought the author into yet more intimate acquaintance than he had before with one of the most beautiful characters, one of the most unselfish lives, he has ever known. There is one expression that has accompanied him through all his labours, haunting his mind like some favourite musical refrain, an expression which might indeed be made the running headline for the whole of this volume—'*He lived not unto himself.*' In examining the hundreds of Mr. Sturge's letters that have passed under his eye, nothing has struck him so forcibly as this—how little they contain about Mr. Sturge; how rare are the allusions to himself, to his own circumstances, his own business, his own health, his own feelings, and even his own labours. He talked very little *about* even the work he was doing, not from any constrained or intentional reticence, but from simple unconsciousness that he was doing anything deserving or requiring to be talked about. His life was indeed a life devoted with rare singleness of purpose to the good of others and the glory of God.

The biographer hardly dares hope that he has succeeded in commemorating that life in a manner at all worthy of its singular excellence. All he can say is, that if he has failed, it has not been through want of either love or labour.

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MEMOIRS

OF

JOSEPH STURGE.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS.

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Those who have passed over the road leading from Bristol to Gloucester will not readily forget the scene that breaks on their view as they gain the top of Almondsbury Hill; for there, spread out before the eye, lies one of the finest landscapes in England, embracing an area of upwards of a hundred square miles, and stretching in an unbroken sweep from the mouth of the Severn to the Forest of Dean, and almost within sight of the smoke of Gloucester. Immediately below

is a large district of fertile land, locally known as the 'Marsh' or 'Lower Level,' richly wooded, principally with elm trees, and extending to the banks of the Severn, which appears like a silver line in the distance. Still looking straight before you, you see the tubular bridge that spans the Wye near Chepstow, and a little below, the spot where that river is absorbed in its larger sister-stream; you then catch a glimpse of Piercefield and the Wyndcliff, while the bold outlines of the Welsh hills form a fitting background to the whole scene. Turning to the left, you can follow the course of the Severn from Portishead Point past the Swash, where the river Avon empties itself into the estuary, up to Aust Cliff, behind which it is hidden for a while, but it reappears again on the right, and may be traced as far as Lydney. Nearer to you on the right, and lying between Aust Cliff and the heights of Old Down, is a rich tract of country, where the edge of the mountain limestone touches the alluvial deposit from the estuary of the Severn. Scattered along this strip of land you can see, though in the spring almost buried in the bloom of orchards, the beautiful rural villages of Tockington, Olveston, and Elberton, the last of which was the birthplace of Joseph Sturge.

In this district, or its immediate neighbourhood, the family of the Sturges had been settled for many generations, either as substantial farmers or as yeomen cultivating their own land. The first of the name of whom there is any distinct record was Thomas Sturge, who lived at Frampton Cotterell in the reign of James I. His son Joseph was the lessee of an estate at Gaunt Earthcott, still in the same vicinity, under the corporation of Bristol, and died about the year 1669. He seems to have joined the Society of Friends almost

from its first appearance. George Fox himself had evidently laboured in that part of Gloucestershire, and in his journal he records a visit he paid to Olveston (which he writes Oldstone) on a very interesting occasion in his life, namely, immediately after his marriage at Bristol with Margaret Fell, the widow of Judge Fell. 'We stayed,' he says, 'about a week in Bristol, and then went together to Oldstone, where, taking leave of each other in the Lord, we parted, betaking ourselves to our several services, Margaret returning homewards to the North, and I passing on in the work of the Lord as before.'* The extraordinary success which attended the ministrations of that remarkable man is a very noteworthy fact in the history of those times. Before his death his disciples might be counted by scores of thousands, scattered over most parts of the kingdom. In some instances, nearly whole neighbourhoods seem to have become converts to the new faith. That such was the case in the neighbourhood where the Sturges lived, is rendered very probable by two facts. First, that at the Friends' burial-place, called Hazel, distant about two miles and a half from Olveston, 1,000 burials are recorded to have taken place between 1650 and 1700, which, in such a sparsely populated district, must have formed a large proportion of those who died in that interval. This is confirmed by the second fact, that, when William Penn went out to America to found the colony of Pennsylvania, he took with him a considerable number of families—as many as forty, if we may trust the local tradition—from these villages and the adjacent country.

It is certain, at any rate, that the Sturges can trace

* Journal of George Fox, ii. p. 76.

their descent through a line of 'Friends,' going back almost, if not quite, to the origin of the Society.

Joseph, the subject of this memoir, was born on August 2, 1793, at an old house called the Manor House, which, both from its name and appearance, we may infer to have been at one time a place of considerable dignity, though used now only as a farmhouse. He was the fourth child and second son of Joseph and Mary Sturge, to whom were born twelve children, eleven of whom lived to attain middle age. He was the sixth of the family who in succession had borne the name of Joseph, the first of whom was the early disciple of George Fox, already mentioned, who died in 1669. His father was a respectable farmer and grazier 'of intelligence,' we are told, 'considerably superior to men of the same class at that time.' His mother was Mary Marshall, the daughter of Thomas Marshall of Alcester, in Warwickshire. She appears to have been a lady of a very gentle, retiring disposition, but probably all the more on that account, as is frequently the case with women of that quiet character, exercising a strong, abiding influence over the minds and hearts of her children.

The family of the Marshalls was originally from Little Tew, in Oxfordshire. One of that name, Ralph Marshall, and supposed to be a lineal ancestor of Thomas, was married in 1645 to Anne Hacker, sister to Colonel Hacker, one of the Commonwealth officers, who commanded the troops at the execution of Charles I. The same Ralph was also, it is believed, closely related to the celebrated Stephen Marshall, the Presbyterian clergyman, who was associated with Calamy and others in the strenuous controversy carried on in those times between the Prelatists and Puritans. He formed one of

'the five Smectymni,' as they were called from the title of a book, very famous in its day, in reply to a work of Bishop Hall in defence of episcopacy and liturgy, which book purported to have been 'written by Smectymnuus,' a word which was composed of the initials of the authors' names, who were Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Mathew Newcomen, and William Spurstowe.* The family of the Marshalls, like that of the Sturges, had united themselves very early with the Society of Friends. In some curious memoranda in an old Bible still extant, we are told of the grandfather and grandmother of the Thomas Marshall of Alcester, already mentioned, that 'they were early of the principles of the people called Quakers, and brought up their children in that persuasion.'

That this descent of Joseph Sturge from a long line of Quaker ancestry was a powerful element in the formation of his character, we cannot doubt. It is not resemblances of form and feature merely that are transmitted from one generation to another. But moral and intellectual affinities are also, to a large extent, hereditary. The early history of the Friends is the record of a lengthened martyrdom, and the traditions of the Society no doubt contribute to create and foster a quiet but indomitable resistance to oppression, while its religious system inculcates the broadest philanthropy, irrespective of nation, class, or colour. At the time of Joseph Sturge's childhood, there appears to have been a deficiency in Friends' families of direct religious instruction, but they were, nevertheless, pervaded by an atmosphere of religious influence. Tenderness of conscience and obedience to the divine will

* Jordan's *Parochial History of Enstone*, p. 365; Brook's *Lives of the Puritans*, iii. 245.

were carefully cherished. Many opinions and customs of great authority in society at large were of little or none within that secluded pale, and the habit of proceeding in the right line of duty, without regard to consequences, was by precept and example earnestly and habitually enforced upon the young. There is little, of course, to say of his early childhood, which was, no doubt, much like that of other children. He is described as having been a 'very healthy and lively infant, whom it was a pleasure to nurse.' By the favour of Providence, the circumstances in which the young life began to unfold itself were kindly and propitious. His parents, possessed of modest but sufficient means, and marked by their moderation and tranquillity of character,

> 'Along the cool sequestered vale of life
> Kept on the noiseless tenour of their way.'

Their home was the abode of cheerfulness and contentment. He grew up also as one of a numerous family of children, among whom were several sisters, some considerably older, and some about his own age—an inestimable blessing to a boy. In such a secluded district there was small need to restrain them from roaming at will through the meadows, and among the orchards, and over the downs, which give so much of quiet beauty to that part of the country. They lived, therefore, we are told, very much in the open air, and grew rather wild, though the wildness was of a harmless sort. There is one little anecdote of these early years which he was himself accustomed to recite with great glee for the amusement of his children, and which shows considerable quickness of repartee on the part of a child so young.

When about six years old he was on a visit to a

friend of his mother at Frenchay, near Bristol. Sauntering about one day, he came near the house of an eccentric old man belonging to the Society of Friends, who, among other troubles of life, was sorely annoyed by the depredations of a neighbour's pigs. Half in jest and half in earnest, perhaps, he told Joseph to drive the pigs into a pond close by. The boy, delighted with the fun, went to work with a will. But presently a woman, the owner of the pigs, rushed out of an adjoining house with a broom in her hand, which she flourished in great wrath over his head. The tempter, who was still standing by, in order to cover his own share in the transaction, shook his head at the little culprit, and said gravely,

> 'Ah! Satan finds some mischief still
> For idle hands to do.'

The child looked up at him indignantly, and said, '*Thee* be'st Satan, then, for thee told me to do it.'

When he was about seven years old, Joseph went on a long visit to his grandfather Marshall, who lived at a farm called Kingley, near Alcester. This gentleman had lost his wife when he was comparatively a young man, and as Mrs. Sturge was his only child, he generally had one or more of his grandchildren to live with him, among whom Joseph seems to have been the favourite. In a letter to the biographer from Mr. Thomas Sturge, Joseph's eldest brother, the grandfather is described as 'a plain farmer-like man, with little education, but possessed of a good understanding, a most amiable and affectionate disposition, and of the strictest integrity. He was held in great esteem by all his neighbours, and almost revered by his servants and workpeople. His mode of living, like that of most farmers in those days, was very homely; himself, his two nieces, and grand-

children, with male and female servants, took their meals together at a long oak table in the kitchen, the family at the upper end, the servants at the other; and on winter evenings all assembled in or around the large kitchen fire-place, the women working, and my grandfather relating general, political, or family anecdotes, or at other times all listening to some suitable reading by a niece or grandchild; but no approach to impropriety of language or conduct was ever permitted.'

KINGLEY.

In this primitive household the boy spent several years of his early childhood, under conditions that must have been pleasant and genial to the child-nature, and contributed greatly, no doubt, to the healthy developement both of body and mind. His grandfather's house

was situated on a slight elevation on the way between Evesham and Alcester, at an equal distance from the latter place and the village of Wicksford, interesting to the lovers of literature as the scene of a tradition—though, according to Mr. Knight, a fabulous tradition—connected with the early life of Shakespeare.*

It commanded an extensive view of the fertile valley of Alcester, through which the river Arrow flowed, and which was bounded by the Cotswold hills. The farm was conterminous with the fine wooded park of Lord Hertford, whose seat of Ragley was about a mile distant from Kingley. Amid these scenes of rural beauty, the little lad was permitted to roam with almost unlimited liberty, spending whole days nut-gathering and birds'-nesting, for which latter employment he had a great passion. In a brief sketch of his life which he

* The story is to this effect:—Bidford, a village on the banks of the Avon, was the rendezvous of a fraternity of hard drinkers, who were wont to assemble there from all the surrounding villages, including Wicksford, and who were called the Topers and the Sippers. A party of young men from Stratford, among whom was Shakespeare, jealous of the 'bad eminence' which these Bacchanalian villagers had acquired, resolved to put their skill to the test, and for that purpose repaired to Bidford one Whit-Monday. But though they encountered only the Sippers, the least potent section of the drinkers, the Stratforders found themselves no match for those seasoned vessels. In returning home, Shakespeare was so overpowered with drink that he was obliged to spend the night under a crab-tree, known afterwards as Shakespeare's tree. On being invited next morning by some of his boon companions to renew the contest, he refused, and said, 'I have drank enough with

> Piping Pebworth, dancing Marston,
> Haunted Hillborough, hungry Grafton,
> Dudging Exhall, Papist Wicksford,
> Beggarly Broom, and drunken Bidford.'

Though Mr. Knight ascribes these verses to 'some old resident who had the talent of rhyme,' he adds, 'It is remarkable how familiar all the country people are to this day with these lines, and how invariably they ascribe them to Shakespeare.'

wrote when he was about nineteen years old, he says in reference to this period—

'I continued with my grandfather nearly three years, having generally one of my brothers or sisters with me. There I employed myself almost as I pleased, being seldom contradicted. In the summer I was almost wholly occupied in birds'-nesting, which I followed with great avidity. When I saw a nest I was not deterred from getting it by thorns or briers, or anything else, neither did I mind tearing both my skin and clothes in attaining my object—the latter of which, though generally made of strong materials, I used soon to tear to pieces; and I believe I was mostly a very slovenly figure. But this I did not care for, so long as I obtained the birds' eggs, which, when I had got, I made no other use of than to blow the yolks out, and string them on a thread to hang up and look at, unmindful of the pain I was giving to the innocent owners of the nests I was robbing. Whether the fondness of children for this amusement arises from thoughtlessness or native cruelty of disposition, I cannot say, but for the honour of human nature I should hope the former.'

He took great delight, also, in accompanying his grandfather when he went out fishing in the little river that flowed below the house, or shooting in the neighbouring woods, which abounded with game. 'He generally used to put me,' he relates, 'to beat through the wood at some distance from him; but no sooner did I hear the report of the gun, than I dashed through thick and thin towards him, vociferating, "What has't shot, what has't shot?"'

He is described by his eldest brother, Mr. Thomas Sturge, who was sometimes with him at Kingley, as being at this time a singularly active enterprising boy, endowed with exuberant animal spirits, and a most fearless temper, climbing up trees, and plunging headlong into the hedges and underwood in pursuit of his

objects, reckless, as he himself says, about his clothing, which often hung in tatters about him, to the great discomposure of a worthy woman who served in the capacity of a housekeeper to his grandfather. On one occasion she brought the young delinquent before the latter, pointing in despair to a new garment, which had been brought back from the woods rent from top to bottom. 'Ah! Joseph, Joseph,' exclaimed the old gentleman, with a mock gravity, 'we must make thee a pair of tin-breeches, and then all the children in the village will exclaim, "Here comes the boy with the tin-breeches."' Little or no attempt was made, during his sojourn with his grandfather, to teach him anything beyond what he could learn by communion with nature, in the woods and fields and by the river-sides, and from intercourse with the worthy old patriarch and his simple household. But he was placed in circumstances eminently favourable to the hardy growth of his physical nature, and for laying the foundation of that robust bodily constitution which stood him in such excellent stead afterwards amid the toils and labours of the life of incessant activity to which he was destined.

Two or three years before his death, he took his own children to Kingley to show them the spot where their father had spent so much of his childhood. Out of that there grew a little incident which strikingly illustrates the tenderness of conscience for which he was remarkable through life. As he passed through the familiar scenes of his early days, amid the crowd of pensive and tender associations that, no doubt, thronged through his mind, there was one of a painful nature, because connected with an act of childish wrong-doing. Walking through the village of Wicksford, already referred to, in company with Mr. Joseph Bayzand, the present occu-

pant of Kingley, they came to a little public-house dignified with the name of the 'Fish Inn,' at the sight of which there flashed through his memory the fact that, nearly sixty years before, he and a servant-boy of his grandfather's had obtained from the landlady of the house a change in copper for a sixpenny-piece, which they knew to be bad. Trivial as many would be disposed to regard such an offence, Joseph Sturge could not rest satisfied until he had made what atonement he could for this sin of his youth. Accordingly on his return to Birmingham he wrote the following letter to Mr. Bayzand :—

'ESTEEMED FRIEND,—The kind attention I received from thee when calling at Kingley with some of my family the summer before last has often inclined me to write thee a few lines on a matter which, though it may appear a trifle, has, whenever it has passed across my memory, caused me uneasiness. It is now, I believe, nearer sixty than fifty years ago (at the age of about nine years, I think) I was guilty, in conjunction with one of my grandfather's servant boys, of defrauding the landlady of the Fish Inn at Wicksford (Mrs. Haynes) of sixpence, by getting change in copper for a sixpenny piece which we knew not to be a good one. How far I was led into it by the servant boy, who was older than I, I cannot tell, but it would be a satisfaction to me to pay two hundredfold, say 5*l.*, to such relatives of the Mrs. Haynes we acted so unjustly to as, were she living, she would most wish to assist, if thou could'st kindly put me in the way of doing so. From the inquiry I made when with thee at Wicksford, and which thou wilt see was not altogether dictated by curiosity, I think I understood there was no direct descendant of Mrs. Haynes living; but if thou think'st the money can be satisfactorily appropriated, please to let me know. But perhaps there will be no advantage in letting my motive for giving it be known beyond thyself, though I have no strong

objection to it, if it is thought best. Hoping thou wilt excuse a stranger for giving thee so much trouble,'

'I am, very respectfully,

'Thy obliged friend,

'Joseph Sturge.'

The inquisition was accordingly made, and it was discovered that there *was* a granddaughter of Mrs. Haynes living in Wicksford, with a large family, in no very flourishing circumstances, to whom the 5*l.* was given, and proved no doubt a very welcome boon.

Lest anyone, however, should imagine that he looked back with anything like morose or morbid feeling to his childhood's days, let us mention another anecdote told us by Mr. Bayzand, connected with this visit to Kingley. At the back of the house there is still extant the small room in which he was accustomed to sleep as a boy. On seeing this, he described with great glee a trick he was wont to play on the old grandfather. In the garden behind the house there was a long row of cherry trees. It was the duty of Joseph in the fruit-season to scare the birds from the fruit, by ringing a bell that had been hung up among the trees. But as these winged pilferers are known to be very early risers, it was necessary that he should turn out of bed almost with the first flush of dawn. This did not quite suit little Joseph's inclinations; and therefore, as a compromise between conscience and convenience, he contrived to attach a long string to the bell-pull, which he brought into his bed-room, so that he might ring the bell from bed, while the tinkle of it satisfied the old gentleman that the watcher was at his post.

When he was ten years of age he returned home; his grandfather, who was growing old and infirm, having about the same time yielded to the solicitations

of his daughter and her family and given up his farm at Kingley, and removed to the little village of Olveston, in Gloucestershire, about a mile from Sheepcomb, where his son-in-law then resided. Shortly after this Joseph was, for the first time, sent to school. It was a day-school at Thornbury, about three miles distant from his father's house, whither he went in the morning and returned in the evening. The life of unbounded freedom he had hitherto enjoyed, combined with his unusually vigorous and active nature, seem to have rendered the confinement of school at first excessively irksome to him. It is, however, significant and characteristic of the future man that, though he was a remarkably athletic and dauntless boy, he made a solemn resolution with himself never to fight, however sorely provoked. To this he firmly adhered, though the expedient he sometimes adopted to avoid breaking his vow will no doubt provoke a smile. 'Among a number of boys,' he says, in the little sketch of his early life already referred to, 'one's temper is not unfrequently tried, and, as mine was rather of a peppery nature, I found it difficult to keep my resolution; and, in one or two instances, avoided direct boxing only by closing with my antagonist and throwing him on the ground.'

After spending about a year at this Thornbury school, he was sent to a boarding-school at Sidcot, in Somersetshire, kept by a member of the Society of Friends of the name of John Benwell, to whom his pupil bears this honourable testimony—that 'he seemed very solicitous respecting the religious welfare of his boys.' Here he remained about three years, acquiring, and attempting to acquire, nothing more than the rudiments of a plain English education. This was, how-

ever, all the equipment in the form of learning with which he was ever furnished, as he went to no other school after leaving Sidcot. A slight but characteristic reminiscence of his school-days has been communicated to his brother, Mr. Charles Sturge, by one of his school-fellows, Mr. W. W. Young, of Neath. 'Your brother,' says this gentleman, 'was a kind friend of mine for many years; and one circumstance that occurred to me when at school at J. Benwell's, at Sidcot, is so characteristic of his whole life, that I will relate it. He was one of the oldest boys, I was one of the youngest. A boy oppressed me, I appealed to Joseph; he saw me righted, but said I must shake hands and make it up with my opponent. I demurred to this; but he insisted, and said, "William, never let the sun go down on thy wrath." I immediately complied; and often have I since then thought of that boyish advice.'

To the same effect is the account he gives of his own conduct as regards his brother John, who was his junior by six years, and who, during the latter part of his school-days, accompanied him to Sidcot. 'I think,' he says, in the early record from which we have already quoted, 'that when at school with my brother, as far as respected him I endeavoured to do my duty, for I was always ready to take his part when oppressed by any of the elder boys—who are apt to behave in a very tyrannical manner to their juniors—and at the same time tried to prevent his quarrelling with those of his own age.' These slender recollections afford us a glimpse into his early character which is not without considerable interest. 'The child is father of the man;' and it is curious to observe in the school-boy of thirteen, the same combination of quiet firmness in resisting wrong and protecting the weak, with the

cultivation of a placable and conciliatory spirit, which afterwards so strikingly distinguished the man.

When he was fourteen years old, that is, in 1807, he finally left school, and returned to his father's house. About this time do we discover the first indications of his awaking to the consciousness of his own spiritual nature, and its solemn relations and destinies. 'I believe,' he says, 'that at this time I was under strong religious impressions, and was really desirous to act consistently with the will of Him who created me for his glory; but alas! how soon did I give way to the follies of youth, and seemed to care for little except my own gratification.' It would appear that one thing which contributed greatly to produce that deterioration of feeling he here bewails, was the indulgence of a morbid jealousy, under the influence of which he fell, as to his parents' affection towards himself as compared with some of their other children. He seems to have been a boy of a very sensitive nature, and it is possible that his total separation from his parents for several years, during the most interesting period of childhood (an arrangement which seldom fails to beget mischievous results), may have tended somewhat to cool the ardour of parental fondness for the little absentee, and to develope a degree of partiality for those who were always with them, of which the parents may have been themselves scarcely conscious. Be that as it may, we think it is not uninstructive to mark this incident of his early life. It is one of the trials through which many young hearts have to pass, and not the less bitter because it is often borne in secret, or only betrayed by fits of sullenness or passionate emotion, which are generally, but mistakenly, ascribed to mere wilfulness or caprice of temper. It is impossible to guard too carefully in

families against affording grounds for suspicions of this nature. On such matters children are very acute observers, or, rather, they have an instinct of the heart which serves them better than all observation, and which is seldom at fault. They should, if possible, be spared these cankering jealousies, not merely because of the sufferings they entail, which often poison the cup of life when it ought to be most joyously quaffed, but because of the permanently injurious effects they frequently produce on character.

'Soon after this (he says, referring to his return from school) I unfortunately admitted an idea that my parents acted not altogether in an impartial manner towards me and one of my brothers. This most probably was in part groundless, but it was at first the cause of many a secret tear, for, not being of a communicative disposition, I don't know that I mentioned my grief to anyone. Far be it from me to accuse my beloved parents of intentional partiality, for I have been treated by them with great affection, and hope as they decline in years I shall be ever ready to make all the return in my power: but if I may judge from my own feelings, I think parents cannot be too careful in avoiding every appearance of that nature; for after this idea is once harboured in the breast of their children, every trifling circumstance contributes to heighten it, and often actions which before would have passed unnoticed, and which in reality have no such bias in them, have that construction put upon them, and in the youthful mind, which is generally alive to the refinements of sensibility, inflicts poignant anguish, which I believe is sometimes productive of very serious effects. This was likely to be my case; for though at first I don't know that I gave occasion to be treated with less affection than my brothers, yet after I had admitted the idea of partiality, I soon began to act with such resentment and obstinacy as might have justified it. I believe for two or three years after I left school that, had I

been in the way of frequent temptation to vice, I should have yielded to it, and might have been ruined for ever; for, being naturally of a cheerful disposition, I was fond of company of the same description, and as the vicious generally endeavour to conceal their remorse under an appearance of gaiety, I might have been betrayed into their evil courses had I been exposed to their company, especially as the advice and reproof of my parents was uncharitably construed into a disposition to debar me from pleasure and a fondness for finding fault with me.'

But whatever were his sufferings or temptations from this source, he seems to have kept them almost wholly to himself, and it is probable, indeed, that much of the self-condemnation with which he reviewed this portion of his boyish days, was principally owing to that severity of judgment which, as will be found hereafter, he always applied to his own character and conduct throughout life. From the representations of those who remember him at the period in question, we receive no impressions of a sullen or perverse temper, far less of any disposition to vice or vicious associates. On the contrary, he is described as retaining the same buoyancy of spirit, the same joyous life and activity, which marked him as a child, together with great fondness for innocent frolic, and we fear we must add teasing. To this period belongs an anecdote which is preserved in the family, illustrative of his bold and active habits. He was very fond of riding, and though never a skilful, was always a most reckless rider. He had a pony which, not content with galloping along the roads and fields at its utmost speed, he must needs spur up the steepest and roughest banks he could find in the neighbourhood. On such occasions the bailiff on the farm, an old servant of the family, was wont to

interpose his authority with the dictum, 'Thee sha'n't break thy neck, if I can help it.'

After such a brief interval of aimless indolence as often elapses between the conclusion of school-days and the serious commencement of the business of life, he seems to have gradually betaken himself to his father's occupation as a farmer and grazier. It was, indeed, the cherished wish of the latter, who was about to retire from business, that his second son should succeed him as a yeoman in the neighbourhood in which his ancestors had so long borne the same character. For some years—that is, from 1808 to 1814—Joseph acquiesced in this arrangement, though probably with some reluctance, as he never had much fondness for farming. With a view, therefore, the better to prepare and qualify him for his calling, he was not only initiated in all the pursuits and habits of that particular kind of farming which prevailed in that part of Gloucestershire, constantly accompanying his father to fairs and markets to buy and sell sheep, &c., but he was sent for several months in the year to reside with friends, who were farmers in Worcestershire and Warwickshire, with a view to learn something of corn-farming. He seems, indeed, at one time to have contemplated settling in the latter county; for, in the autobiographical document to which we have so often referred, he says:

'About Christmas 1811, I went into Warwickshire, my father having sold a small estate there to the Marquis of Hertford, and I thought it might be a favourable opportunity to apply for a farm under him when there should be one vacant, and, after staying with my friends a few days, I returned with some prospect of having the refusal of the first suitable farm that might offer in that neighbourhood.'

This expectation, however, was not realised, and the old project of settling in Gloucestershire was for some time longer pursued. Accordingly, in certain small journals he began to keep about this time, we find frequent records of early journeys to markets and fairs, of sheep-shearing and barley-sowing, and other occupations of a farmer's life. Towards the latter part of this period he had even begun business on his own account, his father having taken for him a small farm, called Aust Farm, at the back of Aust Cliff, near the estuary of the Severn. His life, however, during this time was far from being wholly absorbed in the labour of the field. On the contrary, we read of pleasant family excursions up the Wye to Tintern Abbey and Swinfield in the summer, of skating by moonlight in winter, and of fine autumn days spent in shooting and coursing—a diversion of which he was passionately fond, though it was very soon relinquished, from the strong conviction that grew upon him that it is not right for a Christian to follow any pursuit simply as an amusement which entails suffering on any of God's creatures.

From that time he fully adopted what the great poet of nature describes as his own resolution

> 'Never to mix my pleasure or my pain
> With sorrow to the meanest thing that lives.'

We catch glimpses also of an association of young men established at Bristol for mutual improvement, under the modest name of 'The Endeavour Society,' to which he belonged. It consisted, as we learn from a friend into whose hands the records have fallen, of the following names, all members of the Society of Friends: John Moore, Samuel Thomas, H. F. Cotterell, George Thomas, J. P. Sturge, and Edward Thomas, to whom was added, soon after its formation, that of Joseph

Sturge. It met once a month, 'confining,' as the rules inform us, 'the subjects of its discussion to science in general, and such branches of literature and the fine arts as are sanctioned by the Society of Friends.' It no doubt gave a salutary impulse to his mind towards self-culture and the observation of nature. He appears to have read three papers before this Society, on Astronomy, Optics, and Meteorology, and in his diary he remarks: 'I think I have no reason to regret having joined the Endeavour Society, for it has given me a greater relish for the study of science, which is in my opinion a pursuit above most others worthy the attention of an intellectual being.'

At this period, also, he began to become interested in some of those benevolent enterprises to which so large a portion of his life was afterwards devoted. His first active exertions of this kind were in connection with the Bible Society, which had then been established about eight years. Under the date of February 11, 1813, we find the following entry in his diary:—

'After going to the market in the morning I attended a meeting of the Bristol Bible Society, where I was much gratified in hearing many animated speeches, which were delivered mostly by the ministers of different denominations of religion. From the reports that were given, the number of these societies appears to be rapidly increasing. Indeed, as the pressure of the times becomes greater, I think British benevolence increases in proportion, for there is scarcely any species of misery but there is some charity open to relieve it; and may these charities continue to increase until misery and want are driven from our happy shores!'

A few months later he is himself actively engaged in the work, as member and secretary of the Thornbury Branch Bible Society, and records his being 'out with

James Hunt over the lower part of the parish of Almondsbury to collect subscriptions for the Thornbury Bible Society, and to see who were in want of Bibles.' Further on, we read of frequent attendances at the Bible Committee, and of a public meeting at Thornbury, 'where Hughes, Thorpe, Mornie, Evans, and Dr. Pole addressed the audience in an eloquent manner. In the afternoon had the pleasure of enjoying the company of Hughes, Mornie, and Evans.'

About the same time his religious feelings received a fresh impulse from a visit paid to the neighbourhood by some eminent ministers of the Society of Friends, namely, William Lewis, Robert Fowler, and William Forster. The addresses and conversation of the last especially, who was indeed a very remarkable man, 'full of faith and power,' seem to have taken strong hold of his mind and heart. He accompanied these friends for several days in their visit to some of the adjoining towns, such as Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucester, Ross, &c., taking great pleasure in aiding them in their mission, by giving notice of their meetings, and providing suitable rooms in which they might be held. Referring to one of these occasions he says:

'R. Fowler spoke once or twice, and W. Forster for a long time; after the meeting was over, he put some small pamphlets in my hands, and requested me to give them to those who appeared to be sober, respectable people. What a glorious work it is to be engaged in, to turn men from their evil ways, and lead them towards a land of eternal peace! While with this friend, I have remembered that part of Scripture which saith, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those who preach the Gospel, who publish peace, and bring good tidings of good things."'

And in parting with this excellent man he says:

'I took leave of W. Forster with regret, for it was concluded that I should go to Ross early the next morning to give the Friends notice to have a public invitation issued to the inhabitants to a meeting there in the evening. I think, though I was but a short time with W. F., I shall ever cherish a love for him as long as memory lasts, however I may be carried away by my passions into deviation from the blessed doctrine which he preached. . . . My warmest wishes accompany him on his journey to Ireland, whither he is going, and where he is likely to be for nearly twelve months. May he succeed in turning many to righteousness, and shine himself, as I have no doubt he will, as the stars for ever and ever!'

He never lost his love and reverence for William Forster. Forty years afterwards, when this admirable man and minister of Christ passed to his reward, Joseph Sturge refers to these early days. Writing to an American friend in March 1854, he says:

'We feel most deeply the loss of our dear friend William Forster. He has left few indeed behind him who had so entirely devoted their time and talents to the service of his Lord and Master, and we cannot doubt that, through redeeming love and mercy, he has entered into his eternal rest. I remember travelling with him as guide, more than forty years ago, when I was in my minority, when he was engaged in the work of the ministry, and his telling me as we walked up a hill together that it was his twenty-ninth birthday. In some respects his loss to our Society on this side of the water appears to me irreparable.'

There is one other incident which happened to him during this period of his life to which we must not omit a reference. In the year 1813, while he was in occupation of the small farm already adverted to, he was drawn for the militia, that service being then compulsory. As it was inconsistent with his principles to

bear arms himself, and he was not one to do by proxy what he objected to do in person, he had to suffer the penalty of his principles. His sheep, therefore, were taken, and he happened to reach home one day just in time to see them being driven off the farm.

He had occasion once in after life to refer to this little incident. When he was in the thick of the Suffrage movement in which he bore so active a part, one of his detractors charged him with having advocated the use of physical force for attaining popular rights. The imputation was so notoriously absurd that it could only provoke laughter wherever it was mentioned—as indeed it did when he adverted to it at that meeting in Birmingham in 1842. But so utterly abhorrent to his principles and temper was the doctrine which he was accused of teaching, that he could not suffer the thing to pass over in silence.

'As a general rule (he said at the meeting referred to) he thought it best to take no notice of attacks made upon him in the public journals, but it had been stated in the "Northern Star" of Saturday last that he had made use of the following language: "The people of this country never could effect the required change except by the sword, and when they were prepared for that his arm was at their service." So far from advocating any such doctrine, it so happened that when he was only eighteen years of age he was drawn for the militia, and but for the fact of having a small farm with a flock of sheep upon it, he should have gone to prison, as a testimony against any appeal to arms.'

CHAPTER II.

IN BUSINESS AND IN THE FAMILY.

Leaves Farming and becomes a Corn-factor at Bewdley—A Visit to North Wales—Begins House-keeping—His proposed Plan of Life—Death of his Father—His Tenderness to his Mother—Letter to her—Death of his Mother—Receives his Brothers and Sisters to his own Home—His Affection and Care for them—His early Experience in Business—Hazardous Nature of the Corn Trade—Losses and Discouragements—His Industry and Energy—Attention to his Religious Duties amid the Pressure of Business—And to Works of Benevolence and Charity—Gradual Commercial Prosperity—Removal to Birmingham—Relaxes his Attention to Business—His Apprehension of the Dangers of great Wealth—His Brother Charles's great Services—His rigid Commercial Integrity—Sacrifices in the Temperance Cause—Anecdote illustrating Conscientiousness in Business—His Conduct as an Employer of Labour—His Leniency to the Unfortunate.

We have already intimated that Joseph Sturge seems never to have had much relish for a farmer's life. It is probable, indeed, that his active spirit aspired almost instinctively after a wider sphere of action than would have been afforded to him as a farmer in a remote country-village, while Providence, which had an appointed work in reserve for him, as an agent in promoting its own beneficent designs, was no doubt 'leading him by a way that he knew not' to the position and circumstances where he could best accomplish the work that was given him to do. In the early part of the year 1814, while on a visit to his friends, the Cotterells, at Bewdley in Worcestershire, he received, very unexpectedly, a proposal to enter into business as a

corn-factor, in partnership with H. F. Cotterell, the son of his host. After taking some time to deliberate and consult with his friends, he accepted the offer, and on July 13th in the same year, being not quite twenty-one years of age, he left his father's house, and took up his residence at Bewdley. The separation from his family was a sore trial to him. In his diary we find the following entry under the above date :—'Took my leave of my friends and relations, which was indeed a severe task, as it seemed like breaking all my nearest and dearest ties at once. It was in vain that I accused myself of weakness in giving way to my grief; I hardly knew how much I loved them till I was about to lose them.' He left behind him a parcel containing a present for each member of the family, together with a letter, in which he bade them an affectionate farewell, and humbly besought their forgiveness if he had ever given any of them just cause of offence, while he assured them that 'neither time nor distance will prevent him from continuing their affectionate son and brother.' Very nobly did he redeem this promise, as will be seen by the sequel. Almost immediately on his arrival at Bewdley, he and his partner started on a tour into North Wales, partly for business and partly for pleasure. A few brief extracts from a diary he kept at that time may interest the reader, as showing the simple and healthy zest with which he entered then, as he ever did through life, into all innocent enjoyment within his reach. They will afford us, also, a glimpse of what has long since disappeared—a Welsh meeting of Friends.*

* By this is not meant a meeting of Friends in Wales, of which there are still several, but a meeting of Welsh people, where the religious exercises were conducted in that language.

'*August* 27.—Went to Llanfair to breakfast. Most of the road was very fine, commanding extensive prospects at intervals of the surrounding country and the distant mountains of Merionethshire. A great number of mountain-ashes grow in the hedges on the road-side, whose red berries made a very pretty appearance at this time of the year. The small town of Llanfair is situated by the side of the river Vernew, and has a fine appearance as you descend towards it. Met with a very kind reception at William Owen's, a relation of H. F. Cotterell, and went with him over his farm at the top of a hill about a mile from the town. As it was market-day, we had an opportunity of seeing most of the people living in the neighbourhood around, who appeared to talk Welsh almost entirely among themselves; and even the crier delivered himself in that language.

'28*th*.—Set off early in the morning, and got to Mallwyd to breakfast; the country, during the latter part of the road, is remarkably beautiful. After riding for some time along the banks of the river Vernew, we arrived at its source; and within a few yards is the source of the river Dovey, the one running into the Irish Sea, and the other pouring its tributary waters into the Severn in a contrary direction. The waters of the Dovey rapidly increase as they flow into the valley below the road, and its rushing noise as it rolls over its rocky bed gives additional charm to the beauty of the surrounding country. While breakfast was getting ready, we walked down to the Salmon Leap, a waterfall where those fish are caught as they leap upwards. There is a very beautiful bridge a little below; the waters of the fall foaming beneath it, and being within the sound of two other waterfalls, the whole has a most romantic effect. Set off after breakfast for Tyddynygareg meeting. The scenery in some places is grand beyond description. A little before we got to Tyddynygareg we came in sight of Cader Idris, which, though it is said to be a mile in perpendicular elevation, did not strike us at first as being particularly lofty, on account of its being surrounded by other mountains. A short time after our arrival a few friends came, perhaps about ten, who live mostly among these

desolate mountains. When the meeting had been gathered about three-quarters of an hour, an elderly Friend got up and spoke in Welsh with considerable fluency, and for some time again, a little before the close of the meeting. The Friend, who lived at the meeting-house, appeared to be the only one who could talk English tolerably well, except one other person who had recently come among them. The women Friends had nearly the same dress as the rest of the country people in most parts of Wales, that is, a high-crowned man's hat, with a long blue or brown cloth cloak, which is, I believe, worn winter and summer. After meeting went on to Dolgelly, about two miles distant. It lies in a rich cultivated vale below, of considerable extent, and surrounded by lofty and barren mountains, with the river Mynach winding down from it towards the Irish Sea. After taking some refreshments at Dolgelly, we left our horses and went on foot to Barmouth, about ten miles off. The afternoon being very fine, the country wore an appearance of beauty exceeding all description. Cader Idris rose over two or three successive hills in majestic grandeur, catching at times the fine clouds that floated in the atmosphere in that direction. . . . .

30*th*.—Set off early in the morning from Mallwyd, and had a fine ride to Llanfair. Went to hear the Welsh harp, a very fine instrument of music; a person sang to it at intervals, but not constantly. We were again treated with great kindness by William Owen, who had a harper to play in the next room while we dined."

For some time after Mr. Sturge's removal to Bewdley he boarded with the Cotterell family at their residence called the Summer-House. It was not long, however, before he commenced an establishment for himself, though on a very modest scale, corresponding with the humble beginnings of his operations in business. Some time in the year 1815 he took a small house of some 15*l*. or 20*l*. rental, in the hamlet of Wribbenhall, on the opposite bank of the Severn to that on which Bewdley

was situated. There his sister Sophia, as had been the dearest wish of her heart, joined him as his housekeeper, as well as his faithful counsellor and companion in all good works—a position which, with one brief interval, she continued ever after to occupy, until her death in 1845. Among the papers found after his death is one which he wrote about this time, headed 'A proposed plan of life which I hope to pursue when I become a housekeeper on my own account.' In this document he arranges the disposal of his time, devoting an assigned portion to business, to his religious duties, to the enjoyments of home, certain hours of the week also to be given to 'some useful engagement, such as attending a charity-school, &c.' 'I hope,' he continues, 'in this, as in all other instances, I shall try to do, according to my poor ability, my duty, and endeavour to live acceptably in the divine sight. The management of my domestic concerns to be left entirely to my sister, whom I hope to have to live with me, or to my wife, should I ever marry. The whole of my expenses, including everything out of my own pocket, not to exceed 1,000*l.* for the first four years after beginning housekeeping. If Providence should so render my endeavours successful as to make my income, during that period, far exceed this sum, rather than increase my own luxuries, lay it out in relieving the distressed, making sufficient allowance for casualties, &c. But should my expenses be found to exceed my income, look over the accounts of the preceding year, and, if it be possible, retrench, rather than presume on the possibility of having a better return next year. To sacrifice many of my own comforts rather than not be able to entertain a friend or relation with pleasure, and give him a cordial welcome. As I am placed almost alone with regard to

our Society, I trust that, however far I may be from attaining a true state of religious experience myself, I may be able so to conduct myself as not to be a stumbling-block to others.'

Such was the humble, prudent, and pious spirit in which he began life.

Before proceeding, however, to follow his course as a man of business, we must look at him for a moment in his family relations—as a son and brother. For though he was not married until nearly forty years old, grave domestic responsibilities devolved upon him early in life. His father died in June 1817, when he was twenty-four, and from that time he seems to have assumed, with all cheerfulness, the character of counsellor and care-taker for those left behind. His first thoughts, of course, were directed to his bereaved mother. The survivors of the family retain a vivid recollection of his extreme tenderness to her at all times, but especially during the period of her brief widowhood. One trifling incident may be mentioned as illustrative of this. Shortly before her husband's death her eyesight had begun seriously to fail, and she was much distressed with the fear of becoming quite blind. Her son thought and enquired constantly for some means to relieve the tedium and depression which her state naturally occasioned. At length, when he was in London one day, a table spinning-wheel caught his eye in Fleet Street. He purchased it, and to his great satisfaction, when he took it to her, he found that when young she had learnt to spin, and it proved quite a solace to her. One of his letters to her after his father's decease still remains, from which we subjoin an extract or two. A few years later, when his own religious knowledge and experience had become deeper,

he would, no doubt, have led her to higher sources of comfort than any which this letter suggests. But the thoughtfulness and delicacy with which he tries to soothe her sorrows are very striking :—

'MY DEAR MOTHER,—Though various occupations tend to divert my thoughts, yet they often recur to thee and the dear circle at Olveston, and I have felt a desire to add, were it only a drop, to the cup of consolation which has been handed by others, as an alleviation of that afflictive dispensation which we have all had, but thou in an especial manner, deeply to feel. But though affection will too frequently recur to what is lost with the pangs of the keenest regret, yet is it not right to endeavour to dissipate such feelings by numbering those blessings which remain; and though a principal source of happiness may be dried up, endeavour to attain a disposition to thankfulness for having so long enjoyed it, rather than mourn its loss with hurtful and unavailing sorrow? Consider, my dear mother, how few remained united so long as you have done; how few have left behind them eleven children, all of whom, according to their ability, would, I believe, esteem it a favour to add to thy happiness, and whom, *he* had reason to hope to the day of his death, would all become respectable members of society, and when they were deprived of his fostering care, would endeavour to lend a helping hand to thee and to each other. Yes, my dear mother, I believe his sufferings in his illness were mitigated by many soothing reflections exclusive of those which he derived from his own peaceful conscience. And now that it has pleased Divine Providence to take him from a state of trial, let us, rather than allow the remembrance of what we have lost to embitter the future, endeavour after a state of cheerful resignation, and an innocent enjoyment of the many blessings we have left. As it has been very justly observed, that 'those most truly mourn the dead who live as they would wish,' so perhaps the greatest respect to their memories is to copy their good qualities. Those which were conspicuous in my dear father were his forgiveness of injuries, and an endeavour to check

all improper indulgence of grief. Few had, I believe, more sensibility and affection, and therefore it must have required great effort to overcome his feelings; but by always striving after it when he deemed it right, he not only did so, but was enabled to afford comfort to others when he himself felt most acutely; and I believe if his spirit could hover round his former dwelling, and it were possible for any earthly consideration to add to his present felicity, it would be the conviction that his removal to happier regions had not embittered thy future days. . . . Far be it, my dear mother, from my intention to imply by these remarks that thou art improperly cherishing grief. I think thou hast already attained as much serenity as, in the time, we could hope for. I only wish to encourage thee to persevere in thy endeavours, and I have little doubt but in time they will be crowned with complete success.'

But the sorrow of the widowed mother did not last long. In less than two years she followed her husband to the resting-place of the weary. The younger members of the family being thus left without a home, our friend left his small house at Wribbenhall, and took a larger one, called Netherton, a little outside the town of Bewdley, where he afterwards resided until his removal to Birmingham. Under this roof did his brothers and sisters, not yet settled in life, receive a warm and generous welcome, Joseph assuming towards them the responsibilities of a father, which he exercised with the utmost delicacy and affection until they had all found homes of their own. With what thoughtful care, with what disinterested love, he watched over them, is evidenced by some of his papers and letters now before us. There is one document, especially, which is strikingly significant of this. His early experience in business, as we shall have immediately to show, was a record of severe struggles and discourage-

ments. But when the clouds dispersed, and the light of prosperity began to irradiate his path, his first thought was how he might turn it to account in favour of his orphan brothers and sisters. In the document to which we have just alluded, after stating his belief that on certain contingencies he might reasonably expect to have realised a considerable sum, which he names, as the reward of several years' hard toil, he goes on to say, that if matters turned out as he hoped, it was his intention to make an offer to his younger brothers, by which they might at once share in an equal degree with himself in whatever advantages might accrue from his long and laborious application to business. He then adds—

'That it be an express part of this agreement (doubtless as much our pleasure as our duty) to appropriate a sufficient sum to enable those of our sisters who may remain unmarried, with the addition of their own income, to keep a comfortable separate establishment, should any unforeseen alteration make it not agreeable to them to form part of either of our families, and that this be done in a way as little likely as possible to make them feel any supposed obligation a burden. . . . There are few families that have been, I should suppose, more united than ours has hitherto been; and any service it has been in my power to render them has been a source of unmixed satisfaction to me, whether I was at the time labouring under personal discouragements or enjoying comparative prosperity; and why should it be less so as I increase in years, even should a change in my situation call me to the discharge of conjugal or parental duties? I believe it would not; for I am convinced that the happiness of children is not generally increased by inheriting affluence from their parents. . . . It is a just order of Providence that selfishness should not only prevent our being of service to others, but curtail our own enjoyments; for what is a source of more rational satisfaction than

the conviction that you have been instrumental in adding to the comfort and happiness of others, and particularly those who are dear to you?'

The plan indicated in the former part of this paper was never carried into effect, owing, among other things, no doubt, to the fact that soon after it was written his own business underwent severe reverses, which confounded all the calculations on which it was based. He says, indeed, in one part, 'I am aware that the above plan would appear to many rather as the Utopian flight of a sanguine imagination than as one that there is any probability of being realised.' But it was a sort of Utopia that could only have been born of a very loving and unselfish temper.

There is a letter extant which he wrote to a younger brother when the latter was quite a youth, which is full of sound counsel and brotherly solicitude. He warns him, though with the utmost gentleness, against certain failings which he had observed in his conduct. One of these was a disposition to indulge rather too freely in raillery at the expense of a younger member of the family.

'In making use of raillery towards anyone, thou should'st be very careful not to carry it further than thou art satisfied is quite agreeable to the person it is aimed at. I don't know that I see danger of thy erring much in this respect towards anyone except H——: and I wish to impress upon thee that, as you are now situated, it is thy place, as the eldest, to be very vigilant that nothing occur to weaken that affection which I hope will always subsist between you; and I beg thee to bear in mind that if it be weakened from ever so trivial a cause, it is very often never restored in all its original beauty. I am far from wishing to restrain innocent cheerfulness, but would rather desire to promote it: but I would wish thee to weigh well the distinction between that proper degree of it

which is the almost necessary attendant of a contented and grateful mind,

"And the loud laugh which speaks the vacant mind."'

He then urges upon him, above all things, not to neglect his religious duties.

'I consider myself under considerable obligation to thee for thy attention to my business, but I hope, my dear brother, thou wilt never so far give thy attention either to mine or thy own as to make it the principal object in view. Under all circumstances endeavour to act acceptably in the Divine sight; let this be the *paramount* object. This disposition of the mind is, I believe, by no means incompatible with a full occupation of the mind with our proper affairs; but it requires great watchfulness. I believe I am no bigot, but I think the principles of Friends approach the nearest of any sect to true Christianity; and though, I doubt not, a person may be totally devoid of religion, and yet conform to the strictest letter of the law, yet I think we should be very cautious how we deviate from any of those peculiarities which belong to our profession. Though they may appear as trifles, yet if we deviate from them merely because they are irksome, we shall, I think, generally find such conduct weaken us as Christians, and we may perhaps be avoiding the only means *we* have of proving our dedication to Him, obedience to whose will is the intent of our creation. On a subject of such infinite importance it behoves us, at least, to be very jealous of ourselves, and to examine thoroughly the ground on which we stand. . . . I wish thee to pay particular attention to anything thy sisters may intimate to thee as not quite meeting their approbation, either in thy manners or conduct. . . . Do not suppose, my dear brother, that anything I have said in this letter is in the least degree dictated by a disposition to think harshly of thee, or a supposition that I have been less defective than thou hast in the performance of my duties. I believe I have much more to condemn myself for than thou hast, and if my example were more worthy thy imitation, there

would be less occasion for me to offer thee advice. Still it is our duty to watch over each other for good, and we may sometimes point out to others dangers which we may not have been able to avoid ourselves.'

There is one point very noticeable in the conduct of Joseph Sturge when at the head of the family of brothers and sisters which had made his house their home—that is, his anxiety to promote confidence and love on their part towards each other. He was not one of those who think that family affection may be trusted to mere natural instinct. In his judgment, a plant so delicate and precious required careful and constant cultivation by all forms of gentle courtesy and generous forbearance. Very amply was he rewarded for his fraternal solicitude in this and other respects. The domestic circle at Netherton has been described to us by those who still remember it, as the very home of peace and love, while the brother who was its presiding spirit came to be looked upon, and continued through life to be regarded by all its members, with a mixture of the deepest affection and reverence. This was very touchingly displayed on one occasion. His brother John, an able and accomplished man, who gave great promise of future usefulness, died in the prime of life. In a little record of the death-bed scene, preserved by one of his sisters, we are told that for some time before his release he was quite lost in delirium. 'But in the midst of it,' says the record, 'his strong and livelong affection for his brother Joseph was many times very touchingly manifested. He always knew *him*, and was often soothed by the tones of his voice. On passing the door of his room a few minutes before his death, I heard him distinctly say "Joseph," and this was, I believe, the last word he ever uttered.'

We have seen in what spirit Mr. Sturge entered on the business of life, and we must now endeavour to ascertain what manner of man he proved himself to be amid the excitements and temptations of that commercial course to which he was now committed. His partnership with Mr. Cotterell lasted only for about three years, after which he started on his own account, and so continued until he was joined by his brother Charles in the year 1822. In this interval of about eight years, he devoted himself to business with unremitting assiduity. At that time the trade in corn was of a singularly hazardous and speculative character. So great, frequent, and sudden were the fluctuations in prices that, though sometimes large fortunes were rapidly made, yet those who did not conduct their affairs with great prudence were liable to be as rapidly involved in ruin, and often with the loss of reputation and character. Launched on such a sea as this, where the currents were so uncertain, and the squalls so violent and treacherous, it required a most vigilant and steady pilotage to avoid shipwreck. It is evident, indeed, from several brief entries in his diary, that Mr. Sturge had to pass through many periods of intense anxiety—so much so, that on more than one occasion he was on the eve of relinquishing the trade altogether; and his sensitive conscientiousness kept him in constant alarm lest he should, whether by imprudence or accident, involve others in loss by his means. It may not be uninstructive if we cite one or two passages indicating the severe discouragements he had to sustain at the outset of his commercial career, and amid what struggles and perplexities were laid the foundations of that extensive business, which afterwards rendered the firm of which he was the head, one of

the foremost houses in the corn trade of England. Thus, in the year 1820, he writes—

'My business has for some time been very discouraging, and I am likely to sustain some heavy losses by my stock in hand. Though I hope I do endeavour not to feel too much anxiety on account of these circumstances, yet I cannot help at times letting them have more weight than I think they ought to have; for if we are but in the station for which Providence designed us, and do but perform our part in it as we ought, I believe it is of very little consequence to us whether we have little or much of this world's goods. I have the last year or two met with some deeper trials than, perhaps, any but myself are aware of, but, I fear, without deriving from them that benefit which I should have done; and if it should seem good to unerring wisdom to try me still further, O that it may be the means of enabling me to fix my hopes more entirely on another and a better world! but should the tide of prosperity set in in my favour, may I be doubly circumspect, and ever bear in mind that all additional outward blessings call for additional gratitude and devotion to Him from whom they are derived: and surely, even now, I enjoy in numerous ways far more than my share of the blessings of this life, and when I am conscious of anything like feelings of discontent arising, should adopt the language of the poet:

"It seems the part of wisdom, and no sin
Against the law of love, to measure lots
With less distinguished than ourselves, that thus
We may with patience bear our moderate ills,
And sympathise with others suffering more."'

Nor was this the effect of mere temporary depression of trade. For, two years later, under date of January 1, 1822, we find the following: —

'I have recently sustained some heavy losses of my property. O that this and other trials I have had to pass through may be productive, as no doubt they were intended to be, of instruction to me, and teach me the utter vanity of all sublunary things! My future prospects are deeply hid in

uncertainty, and I know not, if my life is spared, where at the end of another year I shall have pitched my tent. It seems, however, I think pretty clear, that I shall leave this place, and I trust I am sincerely desirous of moving under the direction of a higher wisdom than my own.'

A few months later, he continues in the same strain :—

'I have again had losses and trials in business, but I fear they have not that purifying effect upon me for which they are no doubt intended. It seems probable that I shall lose very nearly all my property, and I am sometimes ready to think it will be right for me to get into some menial situation. I trust, however, I do feel thankful that I am likely to be favoured to get through without injuring anyone's property but my own, and that I am ready to occupy my proper station, be it ever so low, if I could only clearly see what that was.'

Down, indeed, to a much later period than this, there were critical seasons in the history of that most uncertain trade in which he was engaged, when he seemed to oscillate on the very verge of ruin, and when he must have passed through mental agitations of a very painful and protracted nature. Of one thing, however, he was determined, that through no indolence or remissness on his part, through no perfunctory discharge of his duties as a man of business, should he have to reproach his conscience for want of success. It was not, indeed, in his nature to engage in anything by halves. Whatsoever his hand found to do, he did with his might. But the strenuous energy with which he devoted himself to his calling during the early part of his commercial career was, no doubt, a matter of principle no less than of natural temperament. No otherwise would it have been possible for him to have met the exigencies of the time,

and fulfilled his own obligations. Accordingly we find, that his exertions during these years were such as to tax to the utmost all his alacrity of spirit, and all the vigour of his robust physical frame. A great part of his duty consisted in attending markets in a large circle of towns for the purchase and sale of corn, or for watching the constant fluctuations of the trade. His journeys were frequently performed on horseback, for means of communication were far less ample in those days than they are at present; and as they had to be undertaken in all weathers and in every season of the year, and the distances to be traversed were often great, the labour and fatigue must have been sometimes extreme.

'His industry,' says Mr. Pumphrey,* referring to this period of his life, 'was exceeded by few, and his power of endurance was scarcely less remarkable. Bewdley Meeting was united to Worcester as a Preparative Meeting, and I have known him, at a time of great feverish excitement in the corn trade, come over to Worcester on a first day morning and attend the Preparative Meeting; take the mail at night, and travel (on the old coaching system) an eleven or twelve hours' journey to London; attend Mark Lane market on the second day, proceed by that night's coach to Bristol; attend market there on third day, travel thence to Gloucester, and, reaching there late at night, obtain a few hours' rest before proceeding sixteen miles to Ross to attend his Quarterly Meeting on fourth day; after which he again mounted the coach, and undertook another long journey to Liverpool.'

His journals bear ample evidence to the same effect. It was thus by many years of hard struggles, of deep

* We quote from an interesting sketch of Mr. Sturge's character and labours written for private circulation shortly after his decease, by an early and lifelong friend, Mr. Thomas Pumphrey, who has himself since followed his friend from works to rewards.

anxieties, and of doubtful results, that Joseph Sturge laid the foundation of that fine commercial fabric which afterwards grew so much in extent and in estimation, and enabled him so largely to lend his pecuniary aid to the benevolent enterprises in which he was engaged. There was, of course, nothing very peculiar in his experience in this respect. There are thousands of self-made men in our trading and mercantile community who have worked their way to competence, and even to affluence, through a long course of similar conflicts with early difficulties. But how often is it that the moral nature sustains all but irreparable damage by the process. When men dwell and strive too long in that sordid earthly element, it is apt to enter into their souls,

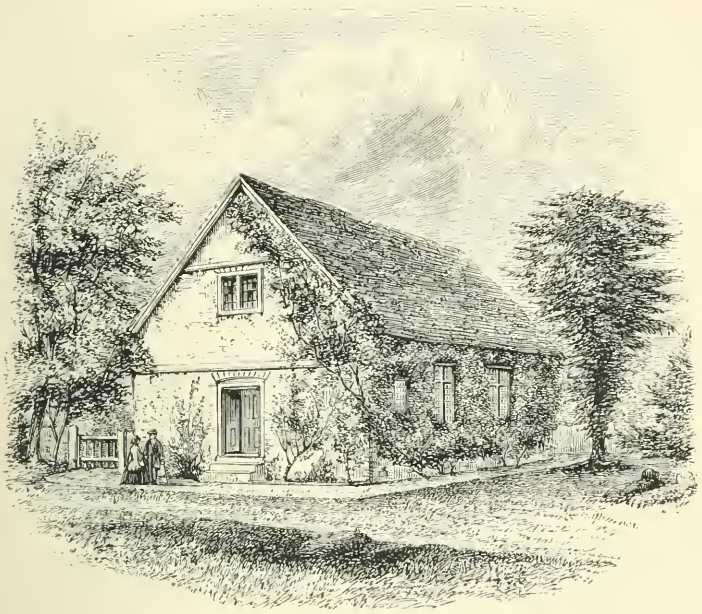
> 'And almost thence their nature is subdued
> To what it works in like the dyer's hand.'

Even where a certain conventional integrity has been irreproachably maintained, the fine edge of a conscientious sensitiveness has in many instances been grievously blunted. Still more frequently is there engendered a hard, grasping, purse-proud spirit, betraying itself in an inordinate over-estimate of the value of wealth, an insensibility to all the higher forms of intellectual and spiritual worth, and a harsh, pitiless judgment for the failings and misfortunes of less pushing and prosperous men. But what does seem to us peculiar in the case of Joseph Sturge is this, that he emerged out of this coarse battle with worldly cares and embarrassments without having suffered any perceptible injury. To the last he preserved a singular tenderness of conscience, a large and generous interest in all moral questions, and a heart instinct with the gentlest feelings of charity for the failings, and of

sympathy for the sorrows, of others. It may be worth while enquiring how this came to pass.

In the first place, then, Mr. Sturge never, even in the busiest periods of life, allowed himself to neglect his religious duties. On the contrary, as if conscious of the peril he incurred, he seems to have redoubled his care in this respect at those seasons when he was drawn most deeply into the dizzying vortex of commercial competition and activity. Accordingly, in the brief journals he kept at the time now referred to, between the years 1816 and 1825, when he was most hardly bested with anxieties in business, we find these two entries continually alternating almost day by day—'Attended meeting' and 'Attended market.' It was not merely at home, but at Worcester, Bristol, Birmingham, and other towns which he visited for business purposes, that he sought every opportunity of retiring from the cares of daily life into the sanctuary of God for meditation and prayer. In the town of Bewdley where he resided there were only five or six members of the Society of Friends living at this time, and these were wont to assemble in a small meeting-house just outside the town. As there was no minister of the body residing in the neighbourhood, their meetings were almost invariably 'silent meetings.' Thither, however, Joseph Sturge repaired with unfailing punctuality, both on Sundays and the accustomed week-days, for many years. Whatever the press of business, however critical the condition of the corn market, no excuse was allowed to serve for otherwise occupying those hours consecrated to silent and almost solitary worship. The spot, indeed, was well adapted for contemplation and prayer. The little rustic chapel, which is still extant, stands quite apart from all other buildings at the bottom of a small

garden, and is shadowed all round with fruit trees, a grape vine creeping over the roof and adorning the homely eaves with its fragrant festoons. A few green mounds, visible through the open door, indicate the spot where some of the rude forefathers of the hamlet



BEWDLEY MEETING-HOUSE.

sleep. Thus shut out from the world, no sound could reach the worshippers but the song of birds or the distant murmur of the Severn, which flowed through the meadows at the back of the building. It is impossible to over-estimate the value of these seasons of seclusion when, retreating from the distractions of his outward life, he could commune with his own soul and with God, and be still. By this means those higher feelings of the soul were revived and refreshed,

> 'That in the various bustle of resort
> Are oft too ruffled and sometimes impaired.'

'He was remarkably endowed,' says the early friend already quoted, 'with the power of being "a whole man to one thing at a time;" and though the voice of brotherly counsel and exhortation was seldom heard at the Bewdley meeting-house, who can doubt that ofttimes his soul was there refreshed from the well-springs of life, and instructed by the immediate teachings of "the minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man."' *

But we must advert to another thing which must have contributed greatly to preserve his mind from the narrow and debasing influence which sometimes attends too exclusive a devotion to commercial life. He never suffered himself to become a mere man of business, and to shut out all other interests from his mind but those of speculation and money-making. He did not, indeed, and could not in those early years, devote so much of his time and labour to public and philanthropic objects as he did after his commercial position was in some degree assured, and others had become associated with him who relieved him from the necessity of giving attention to details. But at no time—not even during those life-and-death struggles of which, as we have seen, his journals give us such pregnant hints—did he deem himself at liberty to become wholly absorbed in the

* Mr. Pumphrey notes a circumstance connected with his attendance at this little meeting which, he says, impressed him deeply when a youth. The house which Joseph Sturge occupied for several years before he left Bewdley was not more than a third of a mile from the meeting-house, but on the opposite side of the river. The family kept a boat for the convenience of crossing, which they could have done in a few minutes. But so important did he feel it to bear an open testimony before his neighbours to the duty of public worship, and not to seem ashamed of his own profession, that he preferred on the Sunday walking round by the bridge, five or six times the distance, which would lead him through the whole length of the hamlet on one side of the Severn, and back again through the town of Bewdley on the other.

selfish pursuit of his own affairs. Side by side with those entries in which he records his losses and embarrassments in business, and the almost Herculean efforts of body and mind which he made to surmount them, together with allusions to yet more bitter disappointments that on more than one occasion befell him, we find others which prove that, even in the severest depths of worldly anxiety and wounded affection, he had still time and sympathy to bestow upon the sufferings of others, and even upon those benevolent undertakings which concerned the general good. On one page he writes on his birthday :

'My business is very discouraging at present, and perhaps Divine Providence may see right to blast all my worldly prosperity. . . . Perhaps I may not live to see another birthday; indeed, if I were but prepared to die, there seems little to wish to live for except that I may be of some use to some of my dear brothers and sisters, deprived of both their parents.'

But a few pages further on there is this entry :

'Severe weather. Went out with W. C. collecting subscriptions for the distribution of coal among the poor.'

Elsewhere, also, we find similar allusions, indicating the active part he took even then in various forms of Christian philanthropy within his own circle.

The London Peace Society was formed in the year 1816, and Mr. Sturge became deeply interested in its objects and operations from the first. In 1818 he originated at Worcester an auxiliary to the parent Society, to which he devoted much time and labour, coming regularly fourteen miles from Bewdley to attend its committees for several years. Very soon, also, his attention was drawn to the Anti-slavery cause. His

services in connection with these and other benevolent enterprises will be more fully narrated hereafter. They are now referred to only in illustration of the statement already made, that in the earliest periods of his commercial life, his heart was kept open to more genial and generous influences by the wise liberality of sentiment with which he refused to become exclusively absorbed in mere matters of business. In a letter to his cousin, Mr. J. P. Sturge, of Bristol, written under date of August 30, 1825, he expresses himself thus:—

'I am obliged to thee for thy good wishes. If I appear to be settling down as an old bachelor, I am no enemy to matrimony, though, I confess, I should be a little afraid of it if I thought it was a state which required family duties and cares to supersede and absorb all others. Canst thou not find a little time to devote to the Anti-slavery cause? There was a great deal of light thrown upon the subject at the last yearly meeting, and I am sanguine in the belief that, if Friends generally do *all* they can, and we are favoured with the continuance of peace ten years longer, we shall be able to give a death-blow to slavery itself, and that in a manner perfectly in accordance with our pacific principles—I mean by the fair competition of free labour. As the happiness of millions are concerned, it is at least worth while, I think, for all of us to examine whether we can do anything to assist in this great work.'

By the steady application of the principles we have indicated, Mr. Sturge gradually surmounted the difficulties which beset him at the outset of his commercial career. His vigorous character, combined with his unswerving integrity, won the confidence of an ever-widening circle of persons, anxious to become associated with him in relations of business. In proportion as his operations thus expanded, he saw more and more clearly that Birmingham, then rapidly becoming the capital of

the midland districts, would be a more suitable locality for his trade than the small provincial town of Bewdley. He had opened an office, and spent several days in the week there, from so early as the year 1820; and as business naturally gravitated more and more in that direction, he transferred his residence thither in 1822, taking up his first abode in Birmingham at a house in Monument Place, but soon afterwards removing to another house in Edgbaston, which he built himself, and in which he continued until the day of his death. From that time his business began to enlarge and prosper greatly, subject only to those perilous alternations to which, as we have already intimated, the corn trade was then so peculiarly liable. There can be little doubt that if Mr. Sturge had now devoted himself wholly to commercial pursuits, he might have grown enormously rich. He was held by those who were most intimately associated with him in such relations, to possess very rare qualifications for business. The energy and decision which marked all his movements were guided by a clear judgment, and a temper singularly calm and self-possessed, while his natural sagacity, sharpened by long experience, had attained, in all that related to the changes and chances of the market, 'to something like prophetic strain.' There was, therefore, scarcely any height of mercantile prosperity and affluence to which he might not have aspired. But not only did he not desire great wealth, but he shrunk from it with absolute dread. He often referred with something like a shudder to the deteriorating effects he had so often witnessed on the character of men as they grew rich, or, if not upon their own, upon that of their descendants of the next generation.

A few extracts from his letters will convey his senti-

ments on these points better than any representation of ours. To one of his nephews who had recently entered into business he says :—

'My experience of the anxieties of a large and fluctuating business—though on the average it may bring in a considerable income—leads me to the conviction that a contented mind, with a limited but tolerably steady return, independently of its great moral and religious advantages, is by far the happiest position, looking only to this life. Surplus wealth brings always increased temptations, and of course increased responsibility, to those who wish rightly to use it.'

The following letter was written to a friend, whom he had evidently kindly warned of the danger, amid increasing prosperity, of 'withholding more than was meet.'

'My dear Friend,—I am obliged by thy letter, and in reference to the subject to which it principally alludes, perhaps in the short conversation we had the other day, I might have expressed myself too strongly; but knowing my own weakness, and how difficult I have found it to keep in a disposition to give in proportion to increase of means, I am perhaps too jealous of my friends. But I hope thou wilt not think that I wished to do more than throw out an affectionate caution. Far be it from me to say that thou mayest not have ample reason for withholding more than thou hast hitherto done; but the more I have reflected upon the subject, the more I am convinced that, notwithstanding the almost universal practice to the contrary, the laying up of a large *future* provision for children or relatives is not a justification in the sight of God for the *present* neglect of anything that duty appears to require; and the curse which such provisions almost invariably prove to those who receive them, would have strongly confirmed me in this view, even had not our Saviour's words been so very explicit on this point. In this I do not, of course, include any needful *present* supply to those

who may have a claim upon us from relationship or any other cause. But the subject is a wide one. Perhaps we may have an opportunity of talking it over before long.'

In the same strain, he writes on another occasion, late in life; while warning his correspondent against too much anxiety to lay up larger stores of wealth for his family:—

'One of the things which has struck me most forcibly with regard to wealth, is the curse it often proves to children. Really, both in our Society and out of it, I find that if I want any young person to help me in any benevolent or religious object, I must, with rare exceptions, go to those who are dependent upon their own exertions for support; the children of the rich, too often, will not only do nothing themselves, but like "the dog in the manger," try to obstruct those who do.'

Again, in writing to a wealthy friend, whose son was about to marry, he says:—

'I sincerely wish thy son as much happiness in his matrimonial prospects as is consistent with a state of preparation for that kingdom where happiness exists without alloy. May he escape the terrible temptation of which He, who alone fully knew the heart of man, warned us when he said that "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for those who are exposed to it to enter into the kingdom of heaven."'

One other extract we give, which derives a very affecting interest from the fact that it was written only a few weeks before his death, and evidently under a consciousness that for him the great change was at hand. It is dated April 2, 1859:—

'Thou speaks of the prosperity of commerce. This is not, I believe, particularly the case here, and does not certainly just now extend to the corn trade. But I confess I do not hear with much pleasure of this prosperity, so far as its influence

on character is concerned. It seems so generally accompanied by an increased use of it for mere selfish indulgences, or an increased desire to accumulate wealth, that it often makes me sad. But the conviction that *I* have a very short time left for labour ought to make me doubly watchful more and more honestly to endeavour to remove the beam out of my own eye, instead of looking for the mote in my brother's eye.'

How earnestly Mr. Sturge strove to fashion his own life in accordance with these principles, is shown by the whole tenour of his conduct. No sooner were his circumstances placed in a position of tolerable security by his early commercial success, than he began to relax his attention to business, and to devote more of his time, his energies, and his substance to that course of public service and philanthropy for which, during many years, he may be said to have almost exclusively lived. We believe, indeed, that in the latter periods of life he continued his connection with business at all, mainly as affording him ampler means for promoting the various schemes of beneficence on which his heart was intent. It was one of the felicities of his lot to have associated with him in his mercantile affairs his brother Charles, who, while every way competent to conduct the large transactions of the firm in which he was the active partner, at the same time so fully sympathised with all his benevolent views and projects, and felt so deeply that he had a mission to fulfil in the service of God and man that he not only acquiesced in, but earnestly encouraged his brother Joseph to give himself to the work to which he was so obviously called, and, indeed, was ever ready to place at his disposal large sums out of his own resources to aid him in accomplishing his objects. By this happy arrangement he soon became more and more liberated from the trammels of business. Before, however, we

follow the current of his history into the more open space along which it is destined hereafter to flow, we must dwell yet a little longer upon some of the characteristics which marked him in his relations as a man of business.

We believe that Mr. Sturge, to an extent that is, unhappily, rare even among professedly religious men, governed his commercial course by the rules of a Christian conscience. Through all the agitations and embarrassments of his early life in business, he never for a moment yielded to the temptation to avail himself of any of those questionable expedients that involve more or less of deflection from the strict line of integrity to which many have recourse, under the pressure of difficulties, and which, even when successful, leave scars upon the conscience, never afterwards wholly erased. As we have already seen by the extracts from his journals, he was determined, whatever became of his own money, if possible to keep his soul clean even from the appearance of defrauding others. And when, in spite of all the diligence and energy he put forth during those years, and all the prudence with which he endeavoured to abstain from unnecessary speculation, he could not escape the vicissitudes of the hazardous trade in which he had embarked, what was the course that he adopted to meet the emergency?

'Twice, at least (says Mr. Pumphrey), he lost a considerable portion of his property, and, with his characteristic decision, he at once reduced his expenditure to his altered circumstances. On one occasion, for three years in succession, he limited his expenses to 100*l.* a year, and during that period was known sometimes to deny himself a dinner, that he might still have something to bestow upon the more necessitous. On another occasion, rather later in life, but before his

marriage, he entirely gave up housekeeping. He often recurred in conversation with intimate friends to the benefit he had derived from this resolute course of self-denial, and the satisfaction it afforded him in the retrospect. How rarely do even Christian men in similar circumstances possess the courage necessary to recognise their true position, and, instead of indulging in that perilous casuistry so prevalent in our day, that appearances must be kept up or credit will suffer, act on the principle that what is morally wrong cannot be commercially right.'

There were many other illustrations of the same loyalty to conscience exhibited by him in the course of his mercantile career. It is now about twenty-five years since the temperance reformation began to attract attention in this country. Mr. Sturge very soon identified himself with that movement. But as forming a regular branch of the corn trade, his firm had, at that time, large dealings in malt. No sooner, however, did he become convinced of the duty of total abstinence, than he felt the inconsistency of selling an article directly concerned in the production of intoxicating drinks. He, therefore, relinquished at once that part of his trade, and at the same time declined granting the further use of certain cellars on his business premises to a house that had previously hired them for storing wine and spirits. Nor did he stop there. Further reflection led him to doubt how far he could with a clear conscience take any part whatever in the purchase and sale of barley for distilling or malting purposes. The issue was, that he and his partner gave up that department of their business also, and thereby sacrificed large annual profits. This seems to have called forth expressions of astonishment and remonstrance from some of their commercial connections, to which Mr.

Sturge replied in the following quiet and modest circular:—

To C. D., Corn Exchange, London.

'Birmingham: 11th month, 5th, 1844.

'Esteemed Friend,—Thy letter of the 4th ultimo has the following remark on the notice contained in our last Monthly Circular:—'The singular resolution you have come to, as to not selling malting barley, has been much canvassed here to-day. I regret it much, and the more so as I can discover no good and sound reason for it.' This observation, and some other circumstances, induce me to give a further explanation why this resolution was adopted, believing that thyself and many other of our friends, though differing in opinion, will not condemn a course which results from a conviction of duty.

Intemperance produces such an incalculable amount of vice and misery, that I consider it right to use my influence to promote the principles of total abstinence. This I feel the more bound to do, as nearly twenty years' personal experience, and much observation in this and other parts of the world, have convinced me that fermented liquors are not necessary to health, and that those who refrain even from what is termed the moderate use of them are in consequence capable of more bodily and mental exertion, and exempt from many maladies which afflict others.

In accordance with these views, our firm has long altogether declined the sale of malt, or the supply of any grain-distilleries, and converted to other uses cellars which many years ago we let to wine and spirit merchants. Our continuing to take commissions for the sale and purchase of barley for the purpose of malting, has for some years caused me much uneasiness; and I have recently been so fully convinced that it is wrong to do so, that I must have withdrawn from our concern had it not been relinquished. The belief that we are responsible for the means of acquiring, as well as for the use we make of our property, and that we cannot

exercise too rigid a watchfulness over our *own* conduct, is compatible with perfect charity towards those who differ from us in opinion.

'I am, respectfully,

'JOSEPH STURGE.'

A further illustration of the high standard of conscientiousness maintained in their trade transactions by Joseph Sturge and his brother, is furnished by the following circumstance which came accidentally to the knowledge of a friend, by whom it has been communicated to us. This friend was staying at an hotel at Harrogate, and having had occasion to write to Joseph Sturge, laid the letter on the table. A gentleman present observing the address, enquired if he were acquainted with Mr. Sturge, and on being informed that they were intimate friends, he remarked —

'He is one of the most honourable and upright men I know. I reside in Ireland, and am in the corn trade, and have had business transactions with Messrs. Sturge. Some years ago a cargo of grain was passing between us, and by some unavoidable circumstances the vessel met with serious detention, entailing very considerable loss. A question arose between us as to the party on whom the loss should devolve; and not being able to settle it ourselves, it was mutually agreed to refer it. The award was given, and the transaction accordingly arranged. A few months afterwards our firm received a letter from Messrs. Sturge, stating that, on deliberate reconsideration of all the circumstances, they had reached the conclusion that the decision of the referee was unduly in their favour, and they therefore enclosed a draft for 300*l.*, which would be to them an equitable and satisfactory adjustment of the affair.'

In this connection, also, we must advert for a moment to Mr. Sturge's conduct as an employer of labour, availing ourselves largely of Mr. Pumphrey's sketch, to

which we have already been more than once indebted. Though residing upwards of fifty miles from Gloucester, where a large portion of his business lay, he maintained an intimate acquaintance with the circumstances of his people there. He visited them at their houses—no light labour where seventy or eighty families were included—talked to their wives and children; entered with them into their struggles and trials; assisted them by his counsel, and in various other ways; and this not in the exercise of a right, or with an air of patronage, as a master over a servant, but with all the attractive sympathy of a warmly interested friend. Annually he met them with their families at a social tea-party, often numbering between two and three hundred, at which they were addressed by himself and others on various subjects affecting their social, moral, and religious welfare. Nor did they ever return home empty-handed. A packet of judiciously-selected books was presented to each, to be added to their little library; for the reception of which his thoughtful liberality had provided a small book-case in each of their cottages. We need not ask whether he or they were familiar with 'strikes?' To them such things were known but by rumour; master and servant were bound together, not only by a common interest, but by warm reciprocal attachment, and the influence which his position over them afforded was exercised by him with no less an object than to win souls to Christ. He was happy, also, in having as his representative at Gloucester his elder brother, Mr. Thomas Sturge, who, with his son, conducted that part of the business, and, being a gentleman of great intelligence and kindliness of heart, entered fully into the views of his brothers, and cordially seconded all their

efforts for the well-being of the men under his charge.*

Nor must we omit to advert to another peculiarity which distinguished the character of Joseph Sturge as a man of business. There are many who seem to think that if, in their commercial relations, they observe a rigid integrity, nothing more can be expected of them in that capacity. To drive a hard bargain, to exact with stern severity the uttermost farthing from others, is, they say, with them, a matter of principle, and they seem to think it almost a merit to harden their hearts, in trade transactions, against all considerations of pity or humanity. Far otherwise was it with Joseph Sturge. He did not, indeed, shrink from enforcing his own rights, even by law, where there was obvious injustice and dishonesty. But he was most lenient to misfortune, and sometimes, instead of pressing his own claims against defaulting debtors, he was known to open his purse to relieve them in the day of their distress. We have before us, at this moment, a striking evidence of the

* Lest this should be thought a portraiture drawn by the hand of a too partial friendship, we subjoin an extract from a Gloucester paper, relating to one of the annual meetings of the Messrs. Sturge and their workmen. The testimony is the more honourable, as it comes from a journal whose political views, as is proved in another part of the very article from which we are about to cite, differed widely from theirs. 'In another page,' says this writer, 'we report the proceedings of a tea-party held in this city on Monday evening last. The founders of the festivity were the Messrs. Sturge, corn merchants, of Birmingham and Gloucester, and who, we should be almost tempted to think, are the veritable Brothers Cherubble, so honourably mentioned by Dickens for their philanthropy and kind consideration of the persons in their service. That very worthy and fraternal firm has been criticised as an extravagant creation of the fancy of the author of "Nicholas Nickleby;" but we are very happy to know that there is at least one firm in real life, and concerned in the actual business affairs of commerce, whose conduct towards their dependants does afford countenance to Mr. Dickens's amiable exaggeration.'

relenting tenderness of his nature even in reference to a case whose turpitude could scarcely be surpassed. A person who had been long intimately connected in business with the firm of which he was the head, and in whom they had placed unlimited confidence, suddenly decamped to America with a large sum of money, and, what was still worse, leaving behind him many bills to which he had forged the signatures of the firm. At the first discovery of this disgraceful transaction, Mr. Sturge wrote to a friend in America to put the officers of justice on the offender's track. Soon after, however, followed another letter, in which he says, 'With regard to ——, though our loss by him was about 50,000 dollars, I am not disposed to take any steps to bring him back to justice.' And when, some months afterwards, the delinquent was apprehended by other agency than that of his firm, it makes one almost smile to hear him say to his friend, though it is a smile assuredly in which there is no bitterness, 'Thou would'st probably see by the newspapers that —— is taken. This I regret, heavy as our loss has been by him, as, from what I have recently heard, I believe that he was suffering even before he was taken for his crimes, perhaps as much as he will by the legal transportation for life which will now probably be his punishment.'

CHAPTER III.

AS A CITIZEN.

His Views of a Christian's Duty as respects Citizenship — Elected a Member of the Birmingham Commissioners — His Objections to Oratorios—Extract from John Newton — Letter to the Commissioners respecting the use of Town Hall for Oratorios—Appeal to the People of Birmingham—His first Appearance in Political Matters—Election at Bridgenorth—Mr. Wolryeh Whitmore—Election at Bristol—Mr. Protheroe—The Reform Agitation—Excitement in the Country — The Political Unions—Mr. Sturge joins that at Birmingham—The Justification of himself and his Brother.

Mr. Sturge had not been long settled at Birmingham before the worth and weight of his character began to be recognised by his fellow-citizens, who soon invited him to bear part in the administration of their local affairs. Nor was he the man to shrink from the duties and responsibilities of citizenship. Without presuming to censure those who thought differently, Mr. Sturge had a profound conviction that to him it was a part of Christian duty to take an active interest in the affairs of the community among whom he lived, and by personal service and influence to do what in him lay to give to those affairs a direction that should be in harmony with Christian principle, and conducive to the general good. Indeed, nothing was more marked, as we shall often have to observe in the course of this biography, than the decision with which he carried his Christianity with him into all the engagements and relations of his public life. An

early illustration of this was given, after he began to engage in the civic activities of Birmingham. At that time the town had no corporation. The management of its local business was entrusted to a body called the Commissioners of the Birmingham Street Act. Of this body he had been elected member. Among the duties that devolved upon the Commissioners was the erection of a Town Hall, rendered necessary by the growing population and commercial importance of the town. But in the Act of Parliament empowering them to do so, there was a provision which placed the Hall occasionally at the disposal of the Committee of the General Hospital, for the purpose of holding musical festivals in support of that institution. Mr. Sturge had a strong conscientious objection to oratorios, on grounds which he held in common with a large number of religious men of various denominations. Perhaps we could not more fully explain the aspect in which the matter presented itself to his mind than by borrowing the language of John Newton, whose lectures on the Messiah were preached and published at the time of the first Handel festival in 1784, when, according to Cowper—

> '. . . . . ten thousand sat
> Patiently present at a sacred song,
> Commemoration mad; content to hear
> Messiah's eulogy for Handel's sake.'

Mr. Sturge reprinted the passage we are about to cite, and circulated it very extensively in Birmingham and the neighbourhood at the time to which we refer.

'I represent to myself a number of persons of various characters, involved in one common charge of high treason. They are already in a state of confinement, but not yet brought to their trial. The facts, however, are so plain, and the

evidence against them so strong and pointed, that there is not the least doubt of their guilt being fully proved, and that nothing but a pardon can preserve them from punishment. In this situation, it should seem their wisdom to avail themselves of every expedient in their power for obtaining mercy. But they are entirely regardless of their danger, and wholly taken up with contriving methods of amusing themselves, that they may pass away the term of their imprisonment with as much cheerfulness as possible. Among other resources, they call in the assistance of music; and, amidst a great variety of subjects in this way, they are particularly pleased with one. They choose to make the solemnities of their impending trial, the character of their Judge, the methods of his procedure, and the awful sentence to which they are exposed, the groundwork of a musical entertainment; and, as if they were quite unconcerned in the event, their attention is chiefly fixed upon the skill of the composer, in adapting the style of his music to the very solemn language and subject with which they are trifling. The King, however, out of his great clemency and compassion towards those who have no pity for themselves, prevents them with his goodness. Undesired by them, he sends them a gracious message. He assures them that he is unwilling they should suffer; he requires, yea, he entreats them to submit. He points out a way in which their confession and submission shall certainly be accepted; and in this way, which he condescends to prescribe, he offers them a free and full pardon. But, instead of taking a single step towards a compliance with his goodness, they set his message likewise to music; and this, together with a description of their present state, and the fearful doom awaiting them, if they continue obstinate, is sung for their diversion, accompanied by the sound of 'cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of instruments' (Dan. iii. 5). Surely, if such a case as I have supposed could be found in real life, though I might admire the musical taste of these people, I should commiserate their insensibility.'

What, no doubt, added greatly to the repugnance with which Mr. Sturge and others regarded these entertainments was the fact that at that time, though happily it is not so now, the principal parts involving the musical recitation of words referring to the most awful solemnities of religion, were often performed by persons not only of irreligious, but of very questionable moral character. Cherishing such convictions, he deemed it his duty to protest against the appropriation of a building erected by general taxation to purposes so offensive to the religious feelings of a considerable portion of the tax-payers. He sent, therefore, the following circular :—

'*To the Commissioners of the Birmingham Street Act.*

'Sensible as I am that a Town Hall in this large and populous place would be a great public convenience, I am reluctant to appear in any way to oppose the erection of such a building: yet with my views, I cannot feel justified without protesting against its intended connection with the Musical Festival, and I therefore purpose to submit the following resolution to the next meeting of the Commissioners:—

'"That no money be expended on the Town Hall with a view to its being appropriated to the performances of the Oratorios, and that an early application be made to Parliament for the repeal of that part of the present Act which places it occasionally under the control of the Musical Committee of the General Hospital."

'The present rather unusual mode of giving notice of a motion is adopted to afford every Commissioner an opportunity of examining whether it ought or ought not to be supported, and it will prevent the necessity of my doing more than simply offering it to the meeting. I am fully aware how strong an interest is felt by many of the higher and middle classes of the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood in favour of the musical festivals, and should,

therefore, notwithstanding my conviction that there is a large and increasing number who altogether disapprove of such performances, have gladly contented myself with silently withdrawing from your body, if I had conceived such a course to be consistent with an honest discharge of my duty. It is not intended to censure those who sincerely believe it right to encourage oratorios, but it surely cannot be denied that it is a violation of religious liberty to tax persons for their support who conscientiously believe them to be inconsistent with Christianity.

'Should I fail in my object, and eventually be placed in the painful situation of refusing to pay the rate, I hope that such a course will not be attributed to vexatious opposition, but be referred to its true cause—the necessity which I feel of not voluntarily allowing any portion of my property to be appropriated to a purpose repugnant to my principles.

'I am, respectfully,

'Joseph Sturge.

'Edgbaston: 4th Month, 28th, 1830.'

Having failed in carrying his resolution he retired from the Commission, and then issued an appeal, which was signed also by a number of ministers and other gentlemen representing various religious bodies, entreating 'those who were sincerely desirous of acting consistently with their profession as Christians calmly to consider whether they could with propriety attend' a performance, involving 'the profanation of the most serious subjects which the human mind can contemplate, by their application to purposes of amusement.' Among the names attached to this appeal are those of Thomas Moseley, Timothy East, J. A. James, Thomas Swan, Thomas Morgan, &c. But as it was far from the wish of these gentlemen to injure the charity, on whose behalf this peculiar, and not very profitable, method of raising money was adopted, they appended to their protest an announcement, that 'a subscription was

intended to be opened, the whole of which would be devoted to the purposes of the General Hospital, whereby those who were desirous of supporting it might have an opportunity of contributing through an unobjectionable channel.' All this did not, of course, deter that class who require to be amused into benevolence from proceeding with their sacred entertainments. But Mr. Sturge felt it his duty to renew his appeals on this subject to the Christian conscience of his fellow-citizens on several subsequent occasions. In one address of a very solemn character, issued immediately after the oratorio was past, he says :—

'The excitement of the festival is over; retire now to your closets, and with that sacred volume before you, from which the most momentous truths have been extracted, to be sung for your amusement by actors and actresses, and to be mixed up in the same entertainment with the fancy ball and the songs and glees of the stage, ask yourselves the question whether, while believing your eternal happiness to depend upon your personal interest in the death and sufferings of your Redeemer, you can stand guiltless in the sight of God for the sanction and encouragement you have given to the prostitution of this infinitely solemn subject.

'Many of you are parents; and is this the school where you would wish your children to learn the worship of the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent? Are not, on the contrary, such exhibitions calculated to confound the distinctions between good and evil in their tender minds? It is more than probable that, before the return of another festival, some of you will in reality be summoned to the judgment seat of Christ and have received that sentence which shall irrevocably fix your happiness or misery. Do you conceive that the representation of this awful scene, for the diversion of the gay, the frivolous, and the careless, which you have sanctioned, can be a suitable preparation for such a period? To your own conscience I leave the reply.'

Mr. Sturge very seldom took part in any public discussion without attaching his name to whatever documents he published. But in the early part of this controversy about oratorios, he did, for some unexplained reason, issue one anonymous paper. Though a calm, moderate, Christian appeal, it was met with violent popular outcry. The then Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry (Dr. Ryder) was known to be strongly opposed to oratorios. The local journals, who advocated those entertainments, chose to ascribe the paper in question to the Rev. Mr. Hodson, the Bishop's chaplain, who sympathised with his diocesan's views. On the strength of this assumption, he was assailed with great bitterness. Lampoons were written against him, and it was reported that he had been openly insulted in the streets. When Mr. Sturge found that another was thus suffering contumely on account of his act, he instantly avowed the authorship, and ever after determined to brave in his own person whatever reproach might attach to the promulgation of such unpopular opinions.

It was not long, however, before circumstances occurred which were to test his moral courage far more severely. It was his lot to attain maturity at a period of extraordinary political excitement, of which, moreover, Birmingham happened to be the very centre and focus. Mr. Sturge never had that superstitious dread of politics, as something 'common or unclean,' which many good men profess. Whenever an opportunity offered to render service to what he deemed sound political principle, he did not hesitate for an instant as to, not only his right, but his duty as a religious man, to use such an opportunity to the utmost. His first active exertions of this nature were put forth in

connection with a contested election at Bridgenorth. The candidate, whose cause he espoused, was Mr. Wolryche Whitmore. Mr. Whitmore was not an ordinary man. At a time when the doctrines of free trade were understood and accepted by scarcely one in ten thousand, he, an hereditary landowner, brought up amid all the strong prejudices of a country gentleman of that day, had, nevertheless, by an independent study of the principles of political economy, worked his way to a clear perception, which he was not slow boldly to avow, of the manifold evils of the corn laws, which most men of his class regarded as the very palladium of our national security and greatness. He was, moreover, a most enlightened and resolute opponent of slavery. Here were two points of sympathy by which Mr. Sturge was powerfully attracted to the side of Mr. Whitmore. In the year 1830 that gentleman was candidate for the representation of Bridgenorth. Under the system which then prevailed the voters for boroughs might be, and often were, scattered over the whole kingdom. A large number of the Bridgenorth voters resided at Birmingham and its neighbourhood. To canvass and collect and carry these to the poll became, therefore, a service of great importance, which might be rendered by the friends of the respective candidates. Mr. Sturge threw himself into the work with uncommon ardour, and spent much time and no little money in aiding his fellow-townsmen to go and vote for the man who advocated Free Trade and the Abolition of Slavery. Mr. Whitmore was returned.

He had an opportunity of rendering a similar service about the same time to another liberal candidate, who stood forward to contest the City of Bristol on Anti-

slavery principles. Mr. Protheroe, though himself a West India proprietor, had, by force of conviction, become an ardent abolitionist. This of course roused against him the hostility of the interest he had forsaken, which was very powerful amongst the constituents in that city. But it inspired Mr. Sturge with earnest zeal on his behalf, and he worked indefatigably to collect the out-lying voters and carry them to Bristol, though in this instance his efforts were unsuccessful.

But other times were at hand of far more serious and general agitation. It is difficult for us in these days, when it has become the fashion to affect a sort of cynical indifference to all public, and especially to all popular questions, to understand the intense excitement which convulsed the country thirty years ago on the subject of political reform. If we would rightly appreciate the course taken by the men of that generation, we must try to put ourselves in the position they occupied during the awful period which elapsed from the end of 1830 to the middle of 1832. Many things concurred to render it one of those eras which move men's souls to their depths.

The country, beginning to recover from the moral and physical collapse which had followed the long agony of the French war, was directing its attention more and more to those flagrant abuses in our political institutions from which it had been purposely diverted thirty-seven years before by military interventions in the affairs of our neighbours.* George IV., whose

* 'The passions were excited; democratic ambition was awakened; the desire of power under the name of Reform was rapidly gaining ground among the middle ranks, and the institutions of the country were threatened with an overthrow as violent as that which had recently taken place in the French monarchy. In these circumstances, the only

character, personal and political, had lain like an incubus on the heart of the nation, was dead, and the accession of the 'Sailor-king' was hailed with more, perhaps, of enthusiasm than reason, as the certain dawn of a better day. The memorable 'three days' in Paris had just passed, and the energy with which the French people had thrown off the tyranny of the elder Bourbons, imposed upon them by the arms of Europe, had awakened the deepest sympathy throughout these islands, and greatly stimulated the desire for reform at home. What was necessary to condense this vague desire into an indignant and passionate resolve, was supplied by the Duke of Wellington's obstinate resistance to any concession whatever to the popular will, combined with his declaration, which outraged the common sense of the whole country, that human wisdom could not devise so perfect a system of representation as then existed, 'for the nature of man was incapable of reaching such excellence at once.' It is not necessary here to describe the struggle that ensued, and which, for nearly two years, rendered it doubtful whether the change that was inevitably impending would issue in a reform or a revolution.

The excitement reached its climax when in May, 1832, the ministry of Lord Grey was defeated in the House of Lords. It was not a time when any man with a spark of patriotism in his bosom could stand aloof in indifference or neutrality. Mr. Sturge at once took his part with characteristic boldness and decision. The most remarkable offspring of that period of excitement were

mode of checking this evil, was by engaging in a foreign contest, by drawing off the ardent spirits into active service, and, in lieu of the modern desire for innovation, raising the ancient gallantry of the British nation.'—*Alison's History of Europe,* vol. iv. p. 7.

the political unions, voluntary associations of the middle and working classes, formed for the purpose of supporting and enforcing the demand for reform. The first of these, we believe, was organised at Birmingham under the auspices of Mr. Thomas Atwood, who afterwards represented the borough in parliament. Mr. Sturge, having satisfied himself that its objects were just, and the means it employed legal and peaceable, joined this body soon after its formation, an example which, at a later period, was followed by large numbers of the most intelligent and wealthy of the middle classes. But it exposed him to great misconstruction and reproach at the time, especially from some of the members of his own Society. The nature of the political unions was, no doubt, very imperfectly understood by those worthy persons, who imagined there could be no agitation without violence. But it is now clear enough that those peaceful and powerful associations—rendered so by the presence among them of men like Mr. Sturge—contributed more than anything else to restrain outbreaks of violence, and to secure the orderly accomplishment of the national will.

'The vast population of Leeds, Birmingham, and Manchester (says Miss Martineau, in her "History of the Thirty Years' Peace"), and countless hosts of intelligent tradesmen and artisans elsewhere, sent shoals of petitions to Parliament for a reform of the House of Commons; and they did something more effectual by forming Political Unions, or preparing for their immediate formation in case of need. This was the force which kept the peace, and preserved us from disastrous revolution.'

The charge brought against Mr. Sturge was, that in joining the union, he was violating the laws of his own Society. In refutation of this charge he and his brother

John, who was involved in the same condemnation, published the following letter :—

Birmingham: 5th month, 16th, 1832.

'A paragraph (sent, we understand, by an individual whose name is withheld from us) having appeared in the last "Birmingham Gazette," stating that, of the members of the Society of Friends, "three or four young men only have in the moment of excitement been induced to enrol their names (as members of the Political Union), and that they have done so in direct violation of the advices of the Society, issued for the government of its members in times in which the public feeling may be agitated by civil and political questions of general interest,"—we, as two of the parties so designated, consider it our duty to give a direct contradiction to the statement in all its particulars.

'Not only is the number of those who have signed the declaration understated, and their character incorrectly described, but we deny that the step they took was any violation of the letter or spirit of the "Advices of the Society."

'The advices alluded to were issued at various periods since the origin of the Society, and for the most part had reference to the particular circumstances of the day. Their general tenor is to recommend a respectful obedience to the king and the constituted authorities (in all points not interfering with conscience), and to caution our members against being "ensnared by the animosity of contending parties," with a particular reference to contested elections, the practices of which they strongly condemn. It will be obvious to any candid reader on perusing them that they were not intended, and cannot be fairly construed to apply to, every participation in political affairs, but only to such as are characterised by unlawful practices and an unchristian spirit.

'In the very same paragraph from which the expressions quoted in the "Gazette" have been taken, we find the following words: "He (the Christian) will not be improperly solicitous for his own ease and security when he sees difficulties or

trouble threatening those around him." Now we should be extremely sorry were it to go forth to the world that there existed anything either in the principles or the practice of the Society of Friends which forbids its members from joining their fellow-countrymen in a peaceable cooperation for the recovery of their political rights, and that at the present crisis it should be thought that they did not, as a body, deeply sympathise with the almost unanimous desire of the nation for parliamentary reform, on which so many of the dearest interests of humanity depend, or were unwilling, as far as is consistent with the peaceable principles of the Gospel, to share in the difficulties and dangers attendant on the effort for obtaining it.

'Equally unfounded is the imputation conveyed in the expressions, "induced in the moment of excitement to enrol their names," &c., which, coupled with what precedes and follows them, are obviously intended to give the impression that we were weakly led by the influence of others to commit an act opposed to the principles of the Society of Friends, which in calmer moments we should regret.

'We consider it a libel on the Society to impute to it principles which forbid its members, at a crisis like the present, from associating with their fellow-countrymen in any manner not inconsistent with the doctrines of the Gospel which they deem the most conducive to the public good. We do not pledge ourselves to defend all the past proceedings of the Political Union; but we assert, without fear of contradiction, that the main object for which it was formed, and the sole object for which we have joined it, is one which nine-tenths of the members of our Society cordially approve; while in its rules and regulations we find nothing which a Christian can condemn.

'We take for example the 1st, 2nd, and 6th articles of the duties incurred by the members of the Political Union, which are as follows:

'"1st. To be good, faithful, and loyal subjects to the king.

'"2nd. To obey the laws of the land, and, where they cease to protect the rights, liberties, and interests of the community,

to endeavour to get them changed by just, legal, and peaceful means only.

'"6th. To bear in mind that the strength of our Society consists in the peace, order, unity, and legality of our proceedings; and to consider all persons as enemies who shall in any way invite or promote violence, discord, or any illegal or doubtful measures."

'Add to these an additional regulation, adopted soon afterwards:

'"That the basis of this Union being a strict and dutiful obedience to the laws, any act or proceeding of any person or persons which may not be in strict conformity with the laws is altogether disowned and rejected by this Union, and declared to be utterly void as to all persons, save such as personally and individually take part in such act or proceeding, and every such person is hereby declared to cease to be a member of this Union, and his expulsion is hereby declared accordingly."

'All the other regulations are consistent with the above; and we ask, can anything be more opposed to disorder and violence? Can anything more effectually tend to secure peaceful obedience to the laws at the present awful crisis, and during the still more fearful times which we have reason to dread, than the influence of an association comprising the great bulk of the lower and a large portion of the middle classes, and binding its members to such a line of conduct as this? We think not; and we have therefore felt it a duty to give it our feeble support by enrolling our names among its members; and in doing so we have acted in the manner most conducive, in our opinion, to the great end of averting the evils which threaten our beloved country.

'So far from repenting the act, we feel convinced, on the most mature reflection, and with a knowledge of what has since occurred, that it was not only right in itself, but that the great accession to the Union which took place was peculiarly well timed. Far be it from us to condemn others who take different views and have adopted another line of conduct; we allow them the same freedom of judgment which we claim

for ourselves. Efforts of various kinds may all work in harmony to promote the same great object; but we earnestly entreat all those persons, whether members of our own or any other Society, who have hitherto been satisfied in doing nothing, to ask themselves the serious question, whether, at such a period, they fulfil the duties of a citizen and a Christian if they any longer withhold their public support from the cause of peace, order, and social improvement?

'Joseph Sturge.'
'John Sturge.'

CHAPTER IV.

EARLY ANTI-SLAVERY LABOURS.

Long Interval between the Abolition of the Slave Trade and Agitation against Slavery—Reasons for this—Absorbing Nature of the great War—Necessity of preventing the Evasion of the Slave Trade Abolition Act—Measures adopted to this End—Mr. Brougham's Bill for making the Slave Trade Felony—Mr. Stephen's Slave Registration Act—Mr. Zachary Macaulay at the Congress of Vienna—The Question of Slavery in the West India Colonies comes gradually before the Country and Parliament—Debates in the House of Commons—Cruelties of the System brought to Light—Perverseness of the Colonial Legislatures and Press—Persecution of the Missionaries—Necessity for a more popular Element in the Anti-Slavery Party—Character of 'The African Institution' and the old Anti-Slavery Society—Joseph Sturge well adapted to be the Leader of the Popular Party—Mr. Buxton's first Motion on the Subject in Parliament—Extracts from Mr. Sturge's Journal—Remarkable Discussion at Friends' Yearly Meeting—His Acquaintance with James Cropper and their public Cooperation—Extracts from the Letters of the latter—Joseph Sturge adopts the Principle of immediate Abolition—His Address at the Friends' Yearly Meeting in 1830.

VERY soon, however, Mr. Sturge's attention began to be more and more directed to that department of benevolent labour in which he was destined to achieve the most important services to the cause of humanity. We allude, of course, to the question of slavery in our West India Colonies.

It has often been remarked as somewhat strange, that so long an interval should have been permitted to elapse between the abolition of the Slave Trade and any serious attempt being made for the extinction of

slavery. The former event took place in the year 1807, and it was not until 1823 that Mr. Buxton submitted to the House of Commons the first resolution ever moved in that Assembly that brought in question, and then only in a very cautious form, the lawfulness of negro slavery. Various reasons, however, may be assigned for this comparative inaction, not the least important of which was the fact, that during the period referred to the public mind was so engrossed with that terrible conflict going on between this country and France, and the disastrous consequences that resulted from it, that it had little time or energy to spare for anything else. For this is one among many other miserable fruits of war, that it tends to make nations selfish, and to withdraw their thoughts from all measures of domestic improvement or philanthropic reform, to the one absorbing and passionate care for their own safety or glory. While the country was bleeding at every pore, or lying exhausted with the wounds it had received during twenty years' strife—how was it possible to engage the sympathies of the people on behalf of a poor and despised race, whose sufferings, however severe, they might well imagine at that time hardly surpassed their own? Nor does it appear, indeed, that the excellent men who laboured so long and so successfully to put the traffic in men under the ban of law and opinion, ever contemplated speedy emancipation as a thing either practicable or safe, though, no doubt, they expected that the abolition of the slave trade would ultimately, and by a necessary though very gradual process, lead to the overthrow of slavery. Their first efforts, therefore, after the victory of 1807, were confined to securing such supplementary legislation as was thought necessary to prevent the

provisions of the Abolition Act from being evaded. And truly there was much yet to do in this direction. For as the offence of importing slaves into the royal dominions, prohibited under that act, was only punishable by pecuniary penalties and forfeitures, it was soon found that many British subjects, willing to run the risk of such penalties for the sake of the enormous profits made, were still engaged in the traffic. To put a stop to this, Mr. Brougham, in 1811, introduced a bill, which was carried through both Houses of Parliament, declaring the slave trade to be felony, the offender being liable to fourteen years' transportation, or imprisonment for five years. But even this law, admirable and effective as it proved to be in its general operation, still left open a loophole for evasion, since one of its clauses excluded the intercolonial slave trade from its jurisdiction. To meet and remedy the abuses to which this omission gave rise, the Slave Registration Act was passed in 1819, principally through the indefatigable exertions of Mr. Stephen. Nor was it a small gain that, through the influence of the Anti-Slavery party in England—in that instance represented chiefly by Mr. Zachary Macaulay—an article was inserted in the treaty of Vienna, pronouncing solemn condemnation upon the slave trade, and binding the great Powers, who were parties to that instrument, to labour together for its extinction.

Engaged thus in consolidating and extending the triumph they had won over the infamous traffic itself, the Anti-Slavery party, for many years, suffered the other part of the question to remain in abeyance. By degrees, however, attention began to be directed more and more to the condition of the slaves in our West India colonies. There were frequent discussions raised

on this subject in the House of Commons by a band of as able and earnest men as ever espoused the advocacy of any cause, including the names of Wilberforce, Brougham, Lushington, Denman, Whitmore, William Smith, and, above all, Buxton, whose vigilance nothing escaped. During the two sessions of 1824–5, no fewer than eight motions were brought forward by these gentlemen, tending to show, in one aspect or another, the flagrant evils of slavery. Perhaps the most important of them all was that relating to the trial and sentence of the missionary Smith, in Demerara. It was introduced by Mr. Brougham on the 1st of June, 1824, in a speech of extraordinary power, which was, however, almost surpassed by the reply with which he closed the adjourned debate on the 11th of the same month. This motion gave rise to a debate of memorable eloquence, in which the cause of the oppressed was admirably maintained by (in addition to the mover) Sir James Mackintosh, Dr. Lushington, Mr. J. Williams, Mr. Wilberforce, and Mr. Denman. These discussions in Parliament could not fail to produce great effect, in gradually educating the public mind for the issue that was inevitable. Out of doors, also, the writings of Mr. Clarkson, Mr. Zachary Macaulay, Mr. Stephen, and Mr. Cropper, were awakening enquiry and reflection in many minds, especially among the more intelligent and religious classes. 'Still,' as Sir George Stephen remarks in his 'Anti-Slavery Recollections,' 'nothing was said about emancipation, or, if said, it was in a whisper. Colonial abuses, colonial obduracy, colonial hypocrisy, were the only topics for agitation, but colonial castigation and colonial emancipation were tabooed.' But from the year 1823 forward, many events contributed to awaken the slumbering conscience of the nation as

to the guilt of slavery. Facts of a very startling nature were brought to light from time to time, revealing the revolting cruelties practised by men, aye, and by women, on the unfortunate slaves whom the system placed at their mercy. But more than all other causes, was the infatuated perverseness of the planters and the colonial legislatures, who seemed as if they studiously selected in every case the course best adapted to rouse public indignation in the mother country. Their wilful evasion in some cases, their open defiance in others, of the various measures recommended by the Home Government for improving the condition of the slaves, gradually angered against them even the official class, otherwise sufficiently disposed to treat them with extreme leniency. The tone of insolent effrontery with which the colonial press defended the wildest abuses of the slave system, provoked the resentment of many who might not have been hostile to the institution of slavery in itself. But more than all, the furious persecution of the missionaries, displayed by the destruction of their chapels, their own wanton imprisonment, or expulsion from the islands, and culminating at last in what was, in effect, the judicial murder of Smith, 'the Demerara martyr,' helped, by degrees, to prepare the country for that cry of total and immediate emancipation which a few earnest spirits were already beginning to raise.

It became gradually apparent, however, that other influences and agencies than those hitherto employed must be pressed by the anti-slavery party into the service of their cause, before the great battle upon which they were now entering could be won. Hardly any eulogy can exceed the merits of those admirable men who first brought, and afterwards resolutely kept,

the slave question before Parliament and the public for nearly forty years. But for the most part they were, both from position and temper, somewhat cautious and conservative. Their reliance for success was, in a main degree, upon aristocratic patronage, parliamentary diplomacy, and private influence with men in office. There was a curious illustration of this afforded in the constitution of the Society they formed to promote their objects after the passing of the Abolition Act in 1807. It was called '*The African Institution*,' its object being 'the improvement of Africa and the extinction of the slave trade.' It consisted almost exclusively of members of the nobility and gentry. Its president was a prince of the blood; its thirty-six vice-presidents were nearly all lords; and its secretary was a member of parliament, below which station the association does not seem to have condescended to look for aid. That this body rendered some service to the cause, while the scene of operation was confined to Downing Street, is likely enough; but when it was found, as the more sagacious of the party now began to find, that the only hope of carrying the stronghold of the great iniquity with which they battled, guarded as it was by so many formidable interests and prejudices, was by evoking a moral insurrection among the people, such a body as we have described was found utterly unfitted for the work that was to be done. Accordingly it died of its own dignity in the year 1827. Even the *Anti-Slavery Society*, which succeeded it, though it had a larger infusion of the popular element, was a good deal fettered in its action by the same timid and fastidious spirit which had marked its predecessor. It was greatly addicted to moderation, compromise, and delay. It shrank from placing the great issue of total and imme-

diate abolition fairly before the country. It deprecated extreme measures and feared popular agitation. It was, therefore, necessary that another order of men, of bolder and more robust, if somewhat less refined, natures should now appear and take the work in hand, not so much to supersede as to supplement the exertions of their more wary and hesitating colleagues. For this species of service Joseph Sturge was pre-eminently qualified; not, indeed, that he had the commanding eloquence which could rouse and control large bodies of men, but he was a thorough man of the people. He had none of the aristocratic fastidiousness, or of the conservative apprehension, which draws back from contact with the masses. He had strong faith in the soundness of the popular instinct, when wisely guided, on all broad questions of humanity and right. He had no nervous fear of the noise and excitement that accompany a popular agitation. He was, moreover, a man of great moral courage, did not shrink from responsibility when following the voice of conscience, and was endowed, withal, with a purpose so resolute that no difficulties could daunt him, and an activity so indefatigable that no amount of labour seemed capable of exhausting him. And finally, he had a singular power of impressing others with a sense of his own perfect sincerity and simplicity of character, and so of winning their confidence and securing their cooperation for the objects he had at heart.

It was in the year 1823, as we have already intimated, that the question of Negro slavery was, for the first time, brought before the House of Commons. 'Public feeling,' says Mr. Charles Buxton, in the Memoirs of his father, 'was roused into activity, and petitions began to flow in; the lead was taken by the Society of Friends, and

it was determined that the presentation of their appeal by the hands of Mr. Wilberforce should be the opening of the parliamentary campaign.' In doing so, he stated that his efforts against the slave trade had commenced thirty years ago, by the presentation of a similar petition from the same body. It so happens, also, that the first allusion we find to this question in Mr. Sturge's papers, bears reference to this very document with which Mr. Wilberforce introduced the question of slavery to the House of Commons. In some rough notes he took of the proceedings of the Friends' Yearly Meeting in London for 1823, is the following entry: 'The petition to the House of Commons was read, and some very interesting remarks made on the state of slavery by William Allen, John Wilkinson, James Cropper, and a number of other Friends.' From that moment the subject took strong possession of his mind. His interest in it was continually nourished by the discussions which took place, almost annually, at the Friends' Yearly Meeting, and especially by the close personal intercourse which soon grew up between him and Mr. James Cropper of Liverpool. Among his papers is an elaborate report, written by himself, of a long and very earnest discussion of the whole question, which took place at the Yearly Meeting for 1824. Among those who bore part in that conversation we find the honoured names—most of them now illustrious in the annals of philanthropic fame—of William Allen, Luke Howard, Richard Phillips, Joseph Gurney, Joseph John Gurney, and Josiah Forster; but the master-spirit of the occasion was James Cropper. He delivered a powerful address, in which he displayed a perfect acquaintance with the subject in all its bearings. He showed how the African slave trade, though prohibited by British

law, was still carried on to a large extent, and with aggravated horrors. He described the abominations of the internal traffic in slaves practised in the United States of America, and then went on to declare, in the most emphatic language, his conviction that there was only one way of effectually stopping the slave trade, and that was by the utter abolition of slavery itself. More than once, during the course of his address, he was so overcome by his feelings as to be unable to proceed; indeed, throughout the whole of this remarkable sitting, a tone of deep religious solemnity seems to have pervaded the minds of all the speakers, so that we need not wonder to find Mr. Sturge closing his report with the remark that 'during the discussion, and particularly while James Cropper was speaking, an almost intense degree of interest was shown, and the numbers present far exceeded those at any of the previous sittings.'

From this time forward Joseph Sturge was irrevocably committed to the cause of the slave, and soon began to enter upon that long series of active services in connection with it which ended only with life. In 1826 he was appointed secretary to the Birmingham Anti-Slavery Society. For some years, as most accordant with his modest nature, his labours were comparatively private, following the lead and acting under the direction of that admirable man to whom we have just adverted. A few brief extracts from his diary for 1826 will afford us a glimpse of him at this period.

1*st Month*, 23*rd*.—'Went in the morning with James Cropper to a meeting at Wednesbury on Anti-slavery, and dined at S. Lloyd's, jun. In the evening attended a meeting at J. A. James's, where J. C. addressed an audience of probably more than 2,000 persons.'

24*th*.—'At Wolverhampton with J. C. at a meeting, which was but thinly attended.'

26*th*.—'Went to Dudley in the morning with Eliza Cropper, Arnold Buffum, and brother John, to attend an Anti-Slavery meeting, where we met James Cropper. The meeting was very satisfactory.'

27*th*.—'About ten o'clock went with J. and E. C. in a chaise to Hereford, where we arrived between four and five. After dinner at J. Benbaw's, attended a meeting, where there was a numerous and respectable company, to whom J. Cropper's statements appeared to give general satisfaction.'

30*th*.—'In the evening had a select meeting at the King's Head, Gloucester, on the Slavery question, when J. Cropper stated his views, in accordance with which a petition was adopted, and an attempt to promote a county meeting concluded upon.'

31*st*.—'Went to Stroud and attended a numerous meeting, which was very satisfactory, and a petition was resolved upon.'

We find, also, that during these early years, from 1826 onward, he was in active correspondence with Mr. Zachary Macaulay, who was at that time the mainspring of the anti-slavery movement in London. A considerable number of the letters of this able and excellent man to Mr. Sturge are still extant. They contain information on a variety of points connected with the subject of slavery, and the measures taken by the committee in London for bringing the matter before Parliament, together with grateful acknowledgments of the services rendered to the cause by their provincial allies. It is obvious, moreover, from the tone of some of them, that the younger and more ardent party, to which Mr. Sturge belonged, were already suggesting certain methods of popular action which were not quite in harmony with the somewhat measured and formal proceedings that were then in favour at head-quarters. It is very

pleasant, however, to observe how completely the young man's energy and the old man's caution were alike under the guidance of the purest and most disinterested motives, and subordinated to the great end which they had both so earnestly at heart.

Unhappily, we are not in possession of the materials necessary to illustrate the manifold activities of Mr. Sturge in the anti-slavery cause during the next few years. The brief diaries from which we have hitherto occasionally quoted, cease almost entirely about this time. His sister Sophia, who was his confidante and counsellor in all his public labours, died in the year 1845. His letters to her would have contained, no doubt, a complete chronicle of the journeys, meetings, and various exertions by which, in conjunction with many kindred spirits, he laboured so hard during the period in question, to evoke, organise, and direct that formidable force of public opinion, which gradually gathered such volume and momentum as sufficed to sweep away clean before it the whole system of slavery in the British colonies. But after his sister's death, Mr. Sturge unhappily destroyed all his own letters to her.

From a singularly interesting memoir of Mr. James Cropper which has never been published, but only lithographed for the use of his friends, we are kindly permitted by his family to extract a few passages from some letters written by him to Mr. Sturge between the years 1825 and 1830, showing how early and how earnestly they were working together in this enterprise of humanity. To Mr. Cropper, indeed, belongs the honour of having been the first missionary of abolitionism in England,* devoting himself for years to the

* That is, the first who spoke and lectured upon it in public.

task of stimulating the torpid conscience of the nation, and visiting, for this purpose, most of the large cities and towns of the kingdom.

Liverpool: 10th month, 14th, 1825.

'When I leave home again I shall probably remain out for some months, if my health permits, and if there is a disposition generally to enter into the subject. The large towns, and especially where the leading people are intelligent, are the great points; but we can talk about the towns in your neighbourhood when we meet. If I had time for it, I should like to go to every town and village in the country where they would be willing to hear me; but as we cannot do all, we must do the best we can. It does me good to feel there are persons who feel so warmly in the great cause as to be willing to accompany me to the neighbouring towns. The work is truly great, and I trust the labourers will increase.

'I am, with great regard,

'Thy sincere friend,

'JAMES CROPPER.'

Six weeks later there is another letter, from which we give two or three extracts.

'MY DEAR FRIEND,—Thy letter of the 23rd arrived before I reached home. I think your resolutions, passed at the meeting at Birmingham, are excellent, and will not fail to do good as an example. After leaving Birmingham thou wouldst hear of the meeting at Coventry from R. Cadbury. It was not so numerous as could have been wished, but still calculated, I hope, to do good. We had a more select meeting at Leicester, where there was an excellent feeling, and I hope they will have a county meeting. Public meetings are the best means of spreading knowledge on the subject, and when we have done that, the burden rests on the country if they continue to support so wicked a system, at the expense of such enormous sacrifices. At Derby we had an excellent meeting, much better than was anticipated; very good feeling was general, and I hope they will have both town and country

meetings. At Nottingham there are some warm friends of our cause; but some of the leading Whigs either take no interest, or are against us. They decided on a town meeting, of which I am glad; for it is time that the advocates of slavery, if there are any such, should show themselves. We have nothing to fear from bringing our cause before the public. . . . With respect to Bristol, I rather doubt the propriety of my attempting anything further there; we must be careful not to push too much in any one place; at least so it seems to me. There are plenty of intelligent and well-disposed Friends who are very able, and I hope very willing, to do what they can. If I should come in that direction, it will be a great gratification to me to meet thee, and a great support to the cause to have thy help anywhere.

'Thy sincerely affectionate friend,

'James Cropper.

'I by no means wish to discourage thee from any efforts to serve the cause in Bristol. I am convinced thy labours have been highly useful. It is delightful to contemplate how one takes one part, and another another. The part I am now taking I should have thought myself least suited for.'

Passing over several other letters relating to similar labours, we insert the following, because it contains the first reference to that demand for 'immediate emancipation,' which Mr. Sturge and some others were now becoming convinced was the only cry by which the country could be effectually roused for the struggle before them:—

Liverpool: 3rd month, 30th, 1830.

. . . . . 'With respect to the anti-slavery cause, I think it is beginning to be generally felt that the time is come for the advocates of the cause to unite in some definite plan. With this view, the [Anti-Slavery] Society in London are publishing the three plans—the emancipation of the children—the purchase of the women—

and the plan proposed by myself. They were sent to me by Macaulay marked "private," but I presume they will be circulated amongst those friends of the cause who have thought much on the subject. I see no feeling in the country, and especially in either House, to make me think immediate emancipation could be carried. If a majority of the people were virtuous, and loved justice more than their own interest, then I should hope to see slavery extinguished at once, but, taking men as they are, I have no hope of its extinction by any act of the legislature which does not comprise compensation, or rather redemption.

'It is a little curious that the three different plans of emancipation are at nearly the same cost to the country, say about 500,000*l.* per annum. It cannot be denied that mine extinguishes slavery soonest; it is nearest the plan proposed by Government, and I believe will prove most agreeable to the West Indians. . . .'

But Mr. Sturge had now made up his own mind conclusively, that he would be no party to demanding or accepting anything less than total and immediate emancipation. For this he suffered some reproach, as being an extreme and impracticable man. But, in truth, in acting thus, on the present and other occasions, he was simply obeying what was a necessity of his nature; he was emphatically a man of action, and that he might act with decision and energy it was imperative that he should be able to present the issue to his own mind in the form of some simple principle resting upon moral conviction. When his intellect was distracted with subtle schemes of expediency and compromise, and when his conscience was entangled in the meshes of a refined and ingenious casuistry, he felt himself paralysed and powerless for all practical effort.

The first step which Mr. Sturge took, after he had reached the conclusion just stated, was to endeavour to

bring over to his views the members of his own Society, who were then, as they had always been, and continued to be to the end of the struggle, the soul and sinew of the anti-slavery enterprise. Accordingly, at the Friends' Yearly Meeting in 1830, he delivered an earnest address, imploring his brethren to take more decisive ground than they had hitherto done on this question. As he has left the notes of that address among his papers, it is inserted here, not only as possessing considerable interest in itself, but as indicating very clearly that simple fealty to principle on which he was wont to act on all matters of importance.

'As I have, after much reflection upon the subject, felt a strong persuasion that, whatever may have been the case with the Anti-slavery Society, we, as a religious body, by taking gradual and not immediate emancipation as our motto, seven years ago, have not only in some degree retarded the great object we have in view, but have allowed a subject which we professed to take up upon principle to merge into a question of expediency, I wish briefly to refer to what then was said by two or three Friends, whose opinions had, I believe, so much weight with many of us, that we took for granted their opinions must be correct, without properly examining for ourselves—at least this was a good deal my case. As those dear Friends, of course, had nothing in view in delivering the sentiments they then did but the welfare of the slaves, so if they are found not to rest on a correct basis, I believe they would willingly retract them. If I recollect right, we were then told that if immediate emancipation were granted, not only would the personal property of the master be endangered, but the boon conferred on the slave in his degraded state would be a curse rather than a blessing to him; that as wisdom dwelt with prudence, if we had a friend who had been long confined in a dungeon, and wholly excluded from light, we should not at once expose him to the bright rays of the meridian sun. But I think few would admit that it would

be that prudence which dwells with true wisdom which would induce us to leave this friend immured in the dungeon, but still in the hands of his merciless jailor, who not only openly declared his determination to keep him where he was, but that he would use his utmost exertions to disqualify him for any other situation. It should be clearly understood that the advocates of immediate emancipation do not thereby mean lawless, uncontrolled liberty, but they say: Grant us only the personal liberty of the slave, and then subject him to such laws as those most interested in his happiness shall think best suited to promote it.

'Another Friend said that, if we urged immediate emancipation, we should be in danger of having all the horrors of St. Domingo acted over again. Now, though I consider this was satisfactorily answered at the time, there is still reason to suppose that an erroneous opinion prevails on this subject even in the minds of many Friends. It is true that some of the pages of the early history of the Independence of Hayti are written in characters of blood and of fire; but it cannot too strongly be borne in mind that this was not the result of the sudden emancipation of the whole of the then degraded slave population, but that it was the crusade sent by Buonaparte against her newly-acquired independence, which, though it failed of success, dyed her rivers with blood and whitened her fields with the bones of the slain. Before this took place, the slaves not only remained peaceable, but continued to work on the same estates and for their former masters; and the most determined opponent of immediate emancipation may be safely challenged to produce a single instance in which that sudden and general removal of the yoke of slavery from about 300,000 individuals was attended with injury. It is of great importance that every one should have correct information on this point, because facts are safer to act upon than theory; and though all the experiments that have been tried tend to the same result, yet this only was on a scale that would be at all comparable to our West India slave population; and the history of St. Domingo, from the commencement of its independence to the present time, may be considered a

triumphant refutation of all those who say immediate emancipation is dangerous.

'It does appear to me, on the fullest investigation, that those who oppose it are backed by neither sound principles nor facts; while those who advocate it are not only supported by sound principles, but every fact on record tends to prove the perfect safety of acting upon them.

'There is, however, one view of this subject which, I think, at least ought to be conclusive with us as a religious body. We hold it to be right that whenever we take up anything on religious principles, we should act upon it, without reference to consequences. Now, it has been said, and I believe unanimously admitted within these walls, and I am sure my own heart responded to the sentiment, that the abolition of slavery had been the *religious* concern of our Society for more than half a century; but I believe it will be found by everyone that will fairly examine the subject, that if this be correct, we must advocate immediate emancipation, and that the reasons for any kind or modification of gradual emancipation are founded only on expediency. It would only be a waste of time in such an assembly as this to show that the interest of a few planters in this country should not, for one moment, be put in competition with all that is dear to 800,000 negroes, merely because the Atlantic rolls between us and them, or on account of the colour of their skin or the woolliness of their hair. Otherwise it might be shown that notwithstanding the enormous sacrifices this country is making to uphold this monstrous system, nothing will preserve the planters themselves from ultimate ruin but the emancipation of their slaves; and such is the dreadfully demoralising effect upon those who reside in the slave colonies that, viewing them with the eye of a Christian and as accountable beings, they are far more to be pitied than the victims of their oppression. T. Clarkson's observation many years ago with regard to those engaged in the slave-trade is equally applicable to slavery, that the effects it produces are regular and certain, they are irresistible; so that neither public opinion, nor the improvement of one age above another, nor the superior refinement

of any particular people, can withstand their influence. There is no remedy for the evils complained of but the total extinction of the system; no human regulations can do away with them because no human regulations can change the human heart. Let us then not hesitate any longer to proclaim to the world that we cannot stop short of urging final and immediate emancipation. When the Christian is convinced that the principle upon which he acts is correct, I believe it does not become him to examine too closely his probability of success, but rather to act in the assurance that if he faithfully does his part, as much success will attend his efforts as is consistent with the will of that Divine leader under whose banner he is enlisted. But I derive encouragement from the conviction that these views are rapidly spreading; though I am not one of those who wished to see exactly such a motion then carried, yet when an individual came forward the other day unsanctioned by the Anti-slavery Committee to propose a resolution to the effect that all children born in the king's dominions after the commencement of 1831 should be free, it was cheering to witness how it touched a chord that vibrated in a thousand bosoms, and had the proposition been that slavery should then cease for ever, I think it would have been echoed from nearly as many quarters;* and though the West Indian body may again attempt to bribe the ministers of the Crown by another and another splendid dinner at the Albion with all its costly viands and dulcet strains of soothing speeches, I feel fully persuaded that if the abolitionists keep steadily at their posts and act upon right principles, the doom of slavery is settled. I hope Friends will excuse my having so largely trespassed on the time of the meeting, as I felt that my own peace was in some degree concerned in endeavouring, however imperfectly, to bring this view of the subject before the meeting. If I have spoken strongly I trust the reflection that during the seven years since we came to the conclusion to advocate gradual and not immediate emancipation, tens of thousands have been sent by this horrid system to an un-

* The incident referred to here is explained in the following chapter.

timely grave, must plead my apology. How much of the blood of these will be required at the hands of those who have been the immediate agents of these enormities, and how much at the hands of those who have actively or passively encouraged them in this country, at the bar of that final tribunal where they are gone, and towards which we are all hastening, I presume not even to conjecture; but surely the dreadful fact should stimulate us to use every exertion we can to promote the immediate extinction of this heavy national crime.'

CHAPTER V.

THE EMANCIPATION ACT.

Difference of Opinion among the Abolitionists—Meeting at Freemasons' Hall — Separation of the Two Parties — Mr. James Cropper's and Mr. Sturge's generous Offer—Formation of the Agency Committee—Appeal to the Country by Lectures—Mr. George Thompson—Mr. Sturge's Part in this Agitation—Rev. William Marsh — Mr. Buxton and Mr. Sturge — Letter of Mr. Buxton—The Movement suspended by the Reform Agitation—Then renewed with additional Vigour—Election of 1832—Boards of Correspondence and their Effect—The Reform Ministry indisposed to take up the Question—Letter to Mr. Sturge—Meeting of Delegates in London—Delegates wait in a Body on the Prime Minister—The Government Measure of Emancipation — Disappointment of the Abolitionists—The Apprenticeship Clause and the Compensation to Planters—The Abolitionists are divided as to the Government Measure—Letter from Mr. Buxton to Mr. Sturge —Mr. Sturge's Letter to Mr. Forster—Mr. Buxton's proposed Compromise—Disapproval of some of the Abolitionists.

We have already intimated that there were now in the field two sections of the anti-slavery party, both of whom were thoroughly and equally devoted to the great object of securing the freedom of the slave. But grave differences of opinion existed between them, both as to the time within which that object might be practicable, and the means to be employed for its attainment. The younger and more democratic element demanded a policy more definite and peremptory than was generally approved by the leaders, and had far greater faith in a bold appeal to the country than in the parliamentary strategy and influence with men in office which had

hitherto been principally employed. At the Annual Meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society in 1830, which was held at Freemasons' Hall, this difference found expression in a very significant manner. The large room was filled to overflowing. Noblemen and members of Parliament, and gentlemen of rank and distinction, crowded the platform. Mr. Wilberforce was in the chair. Brougham, and Denman, and Lushington, and O'Connell, and Buxton were among the speakers. The resolutions, however, were of the usual vague character, merely pledging the meeting 'to leave no proper and practicable means unattempted for effecting, *at the earliest period*, the abolition of slavery throughout the British dominions.' But as even the West India interest had no objection to talk of gradual abolition, this language was felt by the more ardent spirits of the party to mean very little. Towards the close of the meeting, therefore, Mr. Henry Pownall, now chairman of the Middlesex magistrates, stood up in the side gallery, and after deprecating in a few simple words all further hesitation and delay, moved as an amendment:—'That from and after January 1, 1830, every slave born within the king's dominions shall be free.' The effect was electrical. The proposal was received by the assembly with a perfect tempest of applause, which grew only louder and stormier at every attempt made by the prudent occupants of the platform to control it, and to restore the tone of respectable and well-bred decorum from which they had a mortal fear of departing. They had, however, ultimately to accept Mr. Pownall's amendment, with such lowering modifications as the temper of the meeting would permit them to introduce. But the breach between the two parties, of which the incident we have mentioned was only

symptomatic, was too deep to be healed by any temporary compromise. Finally, the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other.

Sir George Stephen, in his 'Anti-Slavery Recollections,' gives a graphic description of the actual circumstances of the separation. An unavailing attempt had been made at one of the committees of the old Anti-Slavery Society to induce that body to assume a more aggressive attitude, by a bold appeal to the country through means of public meetings. A scheme for that purpose had been submitted to them, and rejected as 'well-meaning but impracticable.' Sir George, who was on that occasion the mouthpiece of the party of progress, was about to retire discomfited and indignant, when he was followed by Mr. James Cropper, who said to him, 'Friend Stephen, thou must dine with me at my hotel to-morrow, and bring thy papers with thee. I have some friends who wish to hear thy explanations.'

The dinner accordingly took place, and when it was over, the projector of the scheme for popular agitation rejected by the committee, was asked to explain somewhat more fully the details of his scheme. Some objections were started. 'But,' says the narrator, 'Mr. Cropper soon put an end to them with a very practical question: "Friend S——, what money dost thou want?" "I want 2,000*l.*, but I will begin if I can get 1,000*l.*" "Then I will give thee 500*l.*," said the noble fellow, and another, not a whit less nobly generous, Joseph Sturge, immediately followed with a promise of 250*l.*'

This led to the formation, in the year 1831, of 'The Agency Committee,' which, though living on terms of perfect civility with the 'Anti-Slavery Society,' and numbering, nominally, some of the members of the

latter among its executive, followed a course entirely independent. It addressed itself to the one specific business of informing the public mind on the abominations of slavery, and thereby evoking a popular opinion which should act as 'a pressure from without' upon the Government, and even, if necessary, as was sometimes the case, upon their own parliamentary leaders. It seems strange to us, now that everybody in this country is, professedly at least, opposed to slavery, to be told that, at the period to which we refer, nearly the whole power of the public press was bitterly hostile to the cause of abolition. In the first report of the Agency Committee, they say that 'scarcely a newspaper or a magazine could be found which, on this topic, was just enough to be neutral, and by far the greater number combined to oppose the abolitionists, whatever might be the distinction of their party, or the tenor of their politics.' But the pulpit and the platform were still open to them, and these they determined to occupy by every means in their power. Some of the clergy, and many dissenting ministers, heartily responded to the call made upon them to preach or lecture upon the subject. But the principal reliance of the Agency Committee was upon a regularly organised system of lecturing by agents wholly devoted to the work, followed by the establishment of auxiliary associations all over the country. They were singularly happy in their selection of lecturers. Among them were Mr. Scoble, Mr. Baldwin, Capt. Stuart, and other able and earnest men. Mr. George Thompson especially, with a matchless power of popular eloquence, stirred most deeply the heart of the multitude by his graphic delineations of slavery, and his passionate appeals to the national conscience. In all this agitation Joseph Sturge, though

less prominently before the public than he afterwards became, was one of the most active and constant helpers. So much so, indeed, that Birmingham, next to London, was for many years the most important centre of activity for all anti-slavery operations. Throughout the whole of the midland counties his labours were indefatigable, organising societies, getting up public meetings, corresponding with the friends of the cause, and moving into action all within the circle of his influence by the energy of his character and the contagion of his benevolent enthusiasm. He was happy, also, in being surrounded by a number of men, of various religious denominations, who thoroughly sympathised with his views, and threw themselves into the work with corresponding ardour. Among these may be mentioned, especially, the names of Admiral Moorsom, Revs. T. Morgan, T. Swan, and J. Riland. The Rev. William Marsh, then incumbent of St. Thomas's, Birmingham, now of Beckenham, was, also, a most devoted fellow-labourer with him in this good work. One or two brief extracts from the letters which this excellent man wrote to Mr. Sturge about the time referred to, will furnish a pleasant illustration of the perfect cordiality which existed between them. The following, though without a date, was probably written some time in the year 1831.

'Dear Sturge,—How I wish the most powerful and plain arguments on the whole subject of slavery could be condensed, so that man, woman, and child should understand and oppose the iniquity. My reason for not before offering further services arose from the idea that, if an eye-witness pleader could be found, the effect would be sevenfold: but when there is nothing better to be had, employ me where you please. If I cannot go, I will say so. Therefore, hesitate not to say, "Go to A, B, C, D, &c., and plead our cause."

'Yours affectionately,

'W. Marsh.'

Nov. 4, 1832.

'My Dear Friend,—I always consider it as my duty to go where I appear to be wanted, when paramount duty of another kind does not interpose to prevent. The Oxford meeting might probably be on a Wednesday evening. In this case, I would take my Tuesday lecture here, and return by Friday, and so only miss my juvenile Thursday morning lecture; but if another day be necessary, I would ask some one of my own brethren to take my duty, provided I am not absent on the Sabbath. . . . Let me know the place and the time as soon as you can conveniently; and if you can, for humanity's sake, enlist some other friend. You know how I am pressed for time and strength; but the cause shall not be left destitute of a pleader.

'Yours most truly,

'W. Marsh.'

By such means as these, pursued all over the kingdom, the Anti-slavery question was gradually lifted into a position so imposing as to command the attention of the legislature and the government. There was still, however, considerable difference of opinion between the leaders of the agitation out of doors and the champions of the cause in Parliament as to the best method of procedure. It was such a difference, indeed, as was to some extent inevitable, and such as has always marked, and probably always will mark, every movement like this, which, while deriving its impulse from public opinion, must find its practical accomplishment in parliament. Mr. Buxton and his associates saw more clearly than it was possible for those outside to do the formidable difficulties which met them in front, while Mr. Sturge and *his* associates, from their constant contact with the popular feeling out of doors, were more conscious of and more confident in the immense force

of public opinion by which the demand for immediate emancipation was now backed up. When, therefore, in the year 1831, Mr. Buxton signified his intention of moving, that from a given period no children should be born into slavery, Mr. Sturge seems to have remonstrated, and urged upon him a bolder course. This elicited from the former the following letter, which is introduced here to show how fully both parties recognised each other's perfect loyalty to the great cause for which they were struggling in common.

From Mr. Buxton to Mr. Sturge.

'Dear Sir,—My good friend Mr. Macaulay has this evening forwarded to me your letter, to which I must return a few lines in answer.

'I am really obliged by your letter. It is at all times welcome to me to receive advice and encouragement from those on whom I can place reliance, and who are *true* to our cause.

'The speedy and entire abolition of all slavery is my sole object. I have no opinion *whatever* of any measure that falls short of this, and for none such shall I seek. But in the means to be used for this end we may possibly differ. My wish is to strike a blow at the *root*; to ensure, in the first place, that no *new* victims shall enter this dreadful state; to declare, in short, that from a given period all children shall be born *free*. This, therefore, will be my proposition on the 1st of March; and unspeakable cause for thankfulness and congratulation shall we have should it be carried! In this my course is decided. I have adopted it after the deepest and most conscientious deliberation. Far, however, am I from forgetting the thousands already in bondage, every one of whom has as good a right to his own limbs and liberty as you or I. But I wish first to prevent any more waters flowing into the lake, before I begin to empty it. I mean, however, not only to disavow all *consent* to the slavery of those already

born, but to commit myself to propose measures for their speedy, though gradual, emancipation.

'I totally deprecate any schism among our friends. At the same time, I *must* pursue the course pointed out to me alike by my judgment and my conscience as *the best for the negroes*, which is the sole object I have in view. I trust our friends will not impede our movements; at the same time I cannot but say how much I prefer their going *beyond* me (in *speed* and *abruptness*, for it can be in nothing else) than their falling short of me; and I must candidly own that I should heartily rejoice if every man in England censured me for undue moderation and caution in this matter. I trust we may be favoured, in our battle of March 1st, above all with the blessing of Him *whose is* the cause of the oppressed!

'And I am, dear Sir,

'With much respect,

'Yours very sincerely,

'T. F. Buxton.

'Northrepps Hall, Cromer: January 27, 1831.'

During the latter part of 1831 and the beginning of 1832, the Anti-slavery agitation, like every other sectional agitation, was partially suspended amid the all-absorbing interest of the political struggle which preceded the passing of the Reform Bill. In a paper of 'Memoranda on the Anti-slavery question,' drawn up at that time by Mr. Cropper and Mr. Sturge, we find the following among other suggestions:—'We think it best that nothing should be brought forward which is in any way likely to injure the Reform cause.' But when that great measure had been secured, the advocates of the slave resumed their efforts with all the fresh impulse which they derived from the consciousness that they had now the means of bringing popular opinion to bear far more effectually upon the legislature, than under the old parliamentary system which had been just

swept away. William Knibb, the Baptist missionary, driven from Jamaica by the persecution of the planters, was sailing up the English Channel in June 1832. When the pilot came on board, his first question was, 'Well, pilot, what news?' 'The Reform Bill has passed.' 'Thank God,' he rejoined; 'now I'll have slavery down.' Such, no doubt, was the feeling generally entertained by the friends of the cause. But they did not trust to any such vague general hope. On the contrary, they redoubled their exertions. The election that took place at the end of 1832 afforded them an admirable opportunity to bring the public sentiment, which during the last few years they had done so much to create, to bear upon the candidates, who were seeking the suffrages of the new constituency, for a seat in the first reformed parliament. Boards of Correspondence were formed in London, Edinburgh, and Dublin, whose object was to urge upon the friends of immediate abolition throughout the country to elicit from candidates 'a distinct reply to the following query, 'Whether, in the event of their becoming members of the ensuing parliament, they will strenuously promote and vote for the IMMEDIATE AND TOTAL ABOLITION OF BRITISH COLONIAL SLAVERY?' The effect of this method of procedure was very great. The process of enlightenment and conversion among the class of gentlemen who aspired to parliamentary honours went on with wonderful rapidity, and the result was for the first time an Anti-slavery House of Commons.

It was well these precautions had been taken. For the Reform ministry showed no alacrity to grapple with the question. In fact, they did everything in their power to evade it. There was no allusion to the subject in the speech from the throne, and when

Mr. Buxton, on discovering this omission, instantly gave notice of motion for the abolition of slavery, every effort was made to induce him to withdraw or postpone it, without any distinct pledge that the Government would take up the question. But Mr. Buxton was a man too sternly in earnest to be frightened or cajoled from his purpose. Nor did the state of public opinion out of doors render a retreat possible. The country was now thoroughly roused. A conviction of the essential wickedness of slavery as a crime before God, scorched the national conscience like fire, so as to make its further continuance intolerable. A memorable illustration of this was afforded at the time now referred to. When the rumour was circulated that the Government meant to throw the slavery question overboard, or at the best dispose of it by some measure of miserable compromise, a sentiment of deep indignation shook the public mind. The first intelligence was conveyed to Mr. Sturge by a friend then in London, in these words. The letter is dated March 28, 1833:—

'I have bad news to convey to you, and the time allowed me requires me to be very short in my communication. Fowell Buxton had a meeting with Lord Goderich the day before yesterday, which convinced him that Government had given up all idea of emancipating the slaves. Whether he came to the knowledge of this painful fact by what Lord Goderich said or what he refused to say, I know not, but certain it is that he views the cause of emancipation as renounced by Government, and in consequence has called a meeting of all the emancipating party at Exeter Hall for eleven o'clock next Tuesday. It is now time to stir ourselves. . . . . Sin will lie at our door if we do not agitate, agitate, agitate. We must all become Radicals and Unionists, for if we sit down quietly with our hands before us Government will laugh at us. The people must emancipate

the slaves, for the Government never will, and of this I think the most hoping and peaceful persons will now be convinced.'

Such being the state of the case, no time must be lost in bringing the opinion of the country to bear upon the ministry and parliament. The Agency Committee issued a summons to all the Anti-slavery societies throughout the kingdom, requesting them to send delegates to London without delay, who should wait in a body on the prime minister, and separately on their respective representatives. To ensure that this summons should not fall to the ground, a number of the leading friends of the cause, having divided the country into districts, determined to visit the most important towns in person. Mr. Sturge undertook Ireland and a part of Scotland, and as the time between the issue of the invitation and the assembling of the conference in London was very brief, and there were, in those days, no railways to facilitate rapid locomotion, the labour and fatigue he had to undergo on this journey were very great. He had to travel almost incessantly, day and night, to meet local committees, and call upon a large number of persons in the several localities he visited. But nothing could withstand his energy and zeal, and he succeeded in securing a good representation from those remote regions in the slave's parliament. His colleagues had been no less successful in other districts.

The result was that, on the 19th of April, 339 delegates from all parts of the country met at Exeter Hall, and having adopted an address, which had been prepared by the skilful pen of Mr. Joseph John Gurney, they went in a body to present it to the minister, attracting no little attention as they streamed in black-

coated procession through the Strand and Whitehall to Downing Street. The address was read by Mr. Samuel Gurney, and the essence of it was contained in this paragraph :—'We feel bound publicly and emphatically to declare, that while slavery obtains under any form, however modified or however sanctioned, we will never relax from our efforts, nor swerve from our purpose to exert that influence which we may collectively or individually possess, to effect by all legitimate means its immediate and entire abolition.'

The minister at the time said little that was satisfactory, but that this demonstration of public feeling produced a deep impression is obvious from the language afterwards used by Mr. Stanley in introducing his measure in the House of Commons, when he referred to the determination which existed throughout the country, 'a determination the more absolute and irresistible, because it is founded in that deep religious feeling, on that solemn conviction of principle, which admits of no palliative or compromise, and which has declared itself in a voice to which no minister can be deaf, and which no man who watches the signs of the times can misunderstand.'

Notwithstanding, however, this emphatic declaration, it was found that the Government plan of emancipation was, after all, very distinctly one of 'palliative and compromise.' 'When Mr. Stanley,' says Mr. Charles Buxton, in his father's 'Life,' 'turned from the general principles on which he proposed to act, to his scheme for their application, the feelings of the advocates of the negro underwent a painful change.' There were two features especially in this scheme that were singularly obnoxious to the abolitionists. The first was the apprenticeship of twelve years (afterwards changed

into seven) to which the slave was consigned, and which was, in fact, nothing but the perpetuation of slavery under another name. The other was the compensation given to the slave-owner in the form of a loan of 15,000,000*l.*, afterwards transformed into a gift of 20,000,000*l.* We believe that all the friends of the slaves were dissatisfied with these provisions; but there arose a serious difference of opinion among them as to the practical course to be pursued.

Mr. Sturge and his friends counselled strenuous and uncompromising resistance. They believed that the apprenticeship was worse than a delusion, either as a substitute for freedom or as a preparation for it. They clearly foresaw that to retain the negro in a state of absolute subjection to the masters for a series of years, at the end of which he was to escape from their power, was a sure way to stimulate both their cupidity and cruelty. They would naturally argue that since the law was going to snatch their victim from their grasp at a given period, they would get out of him the most that they possibly could, whether of service or of submission, while their opportunity yet lasted. As to the compensation, the objection of the abolitionists was not monetary, but moral. They would not have grudged a hundred millions for the redemption of the slave, had they thought the principle a just one; but to pay the slave-owner for relinquishing his property in human beings, seemed to them an acknowledgment of the right to make merchandise of the souls and bodies of men. In their view it was the slave, rather than his owner, that was entitled to compensation.* On these and similar grounds they urged

* 'The Metropolitan Committee feel it expedient to call your attention pointedly to the distinction they have drawn between compensation and

determined opposition to the Government measure, under a strong conviction that the state of public opinion at the time would have compelled the ministry to have introduced another more thorough and satisfactory. Mr. Buxton and his friends, on the other hand, were for compounding with the Government, under the apprehension that if this measure were refused, no other could be obtained. It is not necessary now to argue which of the two parties was right. Mr. Buxton lived to see and to acknowledge, with the manly frankness which distinguished his character, that the apprenticeship, even in the reduced and modified form which, by his parliamentary influence, it was made ultimately to assume, was a flagrant mistake. What is very certain is, that both these admirable men and their respective followers were actuated by the purest motives in the causes they severally took. For the time, however, the divergence of opinion which prevailed led to considerable soreness of feeling. It fell to Mr. Sturge's lot to be the medium of conveying to Mr. Buxton a series of resolutions from some body of the more advanced abolitionists, in disapproval of what they deemed a departure on his part from the principle affirmed in the address of the delegates in April. How much it must have cost him to do this,

relief. They wholly and absolutely disclaim the principle of compensation; they deny that it is due; they protest against its payment; they consider compensation to be directly opposed to the very principles upon which the title to emancipation is founded.'—*Circular of the London Anti-Slavery Committees*, April 4, 1833.

'If the debt of immutable justice be paid in full to the injured slave, a humane and considerate people will readily concur in all such reasonable measures for the relief of the planter, or of individual cases of distress, as may meet with the approbation of the British Parliament.'—*Memorial to Earl Grey, signed by the three hundred and thirty-nine delegates*, April 19, 1833.

those will readily understand who knew his extreme tenderness of regard for the feelings of others. This communication, as was natural enough, drew a rather tart reply from Mr. Buxton, in which, however, he said, 'Pray understand that I address myself *not to you*, whose moderation I well know, and that, in this instance, you have endeavoured to soften the feelings of those you are acting with. If I have written with any irritation, I hope you will excuse me. I feel none towards anyone.' This slight cloud, however, soon passed away, for, a very few days after the letter from which we have just cited, we find the following from Mr. Buxton to Mr. Sturge :—

'My dear Friend,—Pray don't think you did wrong in sending me the resolutions. I was much obliged to you for them, and if I appeared to write with any feeling of vexation I am sorry for it. We are doing thoroughly well, I believe. I hear reports about the bill which rejoice me extremely. Will you come and dine with me to-morrow at six o'clock? It would give us all pleasure to see you.

'Yours very truly,

'T. F. Buxton.

'Devonshire: Monday, July 1, 1833.'

How deeply Mr. Sturge's own feelings were tried at this time is obvious from the following letter, which he wrote to his friend Mr. William Forster, on whose sound judgment and high religious character he was wont to lean with almost implicit trust.

18, Aldermansbury: 7th month, 4th, 1833.

'My dear Friend,—I was much disappointed to find thou hads't left town, as amidst the discord of our Anti-slavery camp thou appear'st almost the only one who had the full confidence of all. For my own part, I have suffered so much and been

so much discouraged, from feeling compelled to dissent from the opinions of some to whose judgment, except in a matter of principle, I should gladly defer, that if there should be a committee appointed to watch the bill when it is in committee of the House (as I think there ought to be), I shall be almost tempted to go home, and not act upon it, unless thou wilt return to town. I, therefore, hope that thou wilt hold thyself in readiness to do so; if on the bill's coming out, which we now expect in a day or two, it should be thought desirable. My sole object in troubling thee with this, is to urge it upon thee. I think it would be particularly pleasant to Buxton, with whom I dined the day before yesterday, and had some conversation in reference to the formation of a committee, properly representing the Anti-slavery feeling, to watch the bill. Thy presence, also, would be very valuable on the subject of Christian instruction in the West Indies. We meet about that to-morrow.

'Very affectionately thy friend,

'Jos. Sturge.'

It is hardly necessary to say, however, that notwithstanding this momentary fit of despondency, he did *not* quit his post.

It will be seen that the above letter of Mr. Buxton, in which he speaks of their 'doing thoroughly well,' was written between the delivery of the speech in which Mr. Stanley expounded the Government measure, and the introduction of the bill in which the provisions of that measure were formally embodied. But the bill itself grievously disappointed Mr. Buxton, as, in spite of his remonstrances, it retained all that was objectionable in the original plan. Still, for the reasons already assigned, he did not deem himself at liberty absolutely to refuse it.

His object was to effect a compromise as between the two points that were specially distasteful to the aboli-

tionists, to surrender the twenty millions to the planter on condition of being rid of the apprenticeship. 'I hope,' he said in a letter to Mr. Pringle, 'my friends distinctly understand that my point is to overthrow the apprenticeship at the price of the twenty millions.' He accordingly voted for the compensation grant to the planters, but unhappily his efforts to use this concession as the means to abolish the apprenticeship failed. Two amendments which he moved in Committee, one for limiting the period of transition from slavery to freedom to one year, and another withholding one-half the compensation grant till the apprenticeship should have terminated, were rejected. So that the planters had got their money, but the slaves had not got their freedom, nor had the country any means now of enforcing on the planter an honest administration of the Emancipation Act. All that Mr. Buxton gained by his compromise was to reduce the apprenticeship from twelve to seven years. It cannot be denied that Mr. Sturge and a large proportion of the most earnest and active members of the Anti-slavery party, felt that a grave mistake had been committed by their parliamentary leaders. While giving them the amplest credit for the purity of their motives and the sincerity of their zeal for the enslaved, there was a strong conviction that with more firmness, and backed by such a public opinion as then existed in the country, a better bargain might have been made for the negro. But as Mr. Buxton and his friends in the House had determined to take the course they did, at the last moment, the dissidents out of doors could do nothing but protest, which they did in terms sufficiently indignant. It is not necessary to reproduce those terms here. All the strong feelings excited in that hour of conflict have long since

subsided in the breasts of the survivors, while the two good and great men who were the representatives of the two parties, always amid all their differences recognising and venerating each other's worth, have now met in 'the all-reconciling world.'

CHAPTER VI.

FURTHER ANTI-SLAVERY LABOURS. WORKING OF THE APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM.

Mr. Sturge's Marriage—Early Death of his Wife—Its Effect upon him—His sister Sophia returns to him—Letter to her—Slavery in the United States—Complicity of the Christian Church in the System—Speech of Mr. Sturge on that Subject—Addresses the Wesleyan Conference at Birmingham—Controversy with Rev. Dr. Fisk—Effect of Emancipation in the West Indies—Good Behaviour of the Negroes—Oppressive Working of the Apprenticeship System—Dangerous Provisions of the Act—Measures passed by the Colonial Legislatures—The Negro still virtually a Slave—Unsuccessful Efforts of the Abolitionists to get the Apprenticeship repealed—Mr. Sturge appeals to the Country—Great Meeting at Birmingham—His Speech there—Difficulty of procuring Evidence from the West Indies—His Apprehension that the Colonial Legislatures would defeat the Object of the Abolition Act—Determines to visit the West Indies—Address to him from his Fellow-citizens at Birmingham—Letter from Rev. J. A. James on his Departure—His own Feelings in anticipation of his Journey—Mr. Thomas Harvey is associated with him in his Mission.

After the passing of the Emancipation Act, Mr. Sturge's attention was diverted for a while from public matters to his own domestic joys and sorrows. In April 1834, he married Eliza, the only daughter of James Cropper of Liverpool, the eminent philanthropist, with whom he had been so early associated in the Anti-slavery cause. It was a union that promised great and lasting happiness. Miss Cropper was a most estimable lady, of congenial sentiments and sympathies with himself, and eminently qualified to be a help-meet for him, not only

in his private relations, but in his public labours. But it pleased Providence that the bright prospect thus opening before him should be suddenly clouded. In less than a twelvemonth, he lost both wife and child. We need not wonder that for a moment he was stunned by the severity of this blow. But after a while he learnt the difficult lesson of entire resignation to the Divine will, and instead of bending in selfish sorrow over the grave of his buried hopes, he turned with a saddened heart, no doubt, but with a stronger purpose, to those services in the cause of truth and humanity to which he deemed himself now more than ever called. The state of his feelings is touchingly indicated in the following memorandum, which we find among his papers :—

'1835. 12/31. *Near Midnight.*—How eventful have been the occurrences of the past year to me! How has death destroyed my pleasant pictures! O Lord, grant that it may be sanctified to me! that if before the close of another year it may please Thee to call me home, I may, through the boundless mercy of a crucified Redeemer, find forgiveness for my sins, though they are, indeed, as the sand of the sea for multitude; and if Thou should'st see meet to continue me a sojourner upon earth, and take away more of my pleasant gourds, grant, I beseech Thee, a continuance of that resignation to Thy divine will which I have thankfully to acknowledge Thou hast in the past year so mercifully extended in my times of greatest need. Enable me faithfully and diligently to fulfil Thy divine requirements in any path Thou may'st point out to me. The principal duties, it appears to me, in which I may be called to labour in the ensuing year are:

'The cause of the poor African both in our own colonies and in other parts of the globe.

'The question of birthright membership in our Society.

'The prevention of first-day travelling on the London and Birmingham Railway; and

'The promotion of the recognition of the free Gospel ministry.

'But grant, O Lord, that I may not take one step in regard to any of these questions but as an humble instrument in Thine hand, and in entire accordance with Thy will.'

The effects produced upon his character by this mournful visitation were deep and enduring. But he was singularly favoured in having a comforter and counsellor still left in his own home, on whom his stricken heart could lean with entire trust. His sister Sophia, who had lived with him for many years before his marriage, hastened back again to his side when his brief period of matrimonial happiness was so abruptly brought to a close. With true womanly sympathy she soothed his griefs, while, with that high sense of the responsibilities of life which nothing but earnest Christian conviction produces, she gently weaned him away from what he calls 'the selfishness of sorrow,' by encouraging him to renew his interest in those public duties for which she believed him to be, beyond most men, at once called and qualified. The following letter was written to her during a temporary absence in London, in 1836, apparently on some business connected with the London and North-Western Railway. It is dated on the first anniversary of his wife's death, and presents a very beautiful picture of the perfect communion of soul and heart which existed between the brother and sister.

'MY DEAREST SISTER,—The attendance of my brother directors at the Lord Mayor's dinner has left me an evening alone, which, under other circumstances, I might have found a difficulty in securing, and which I was very desirous of, as being the anniversary of the death of my dear Eliza. I cannot spend a part of it more agreeably, and I think more profitably, than in writing a few lines to thee, my dear sister.

Have I reaped any, and what, benefit from the strokes of affliction with which I have been visited, and which, while the wounds were fresh and sore, I think I have seen clearly were needed? I fear that if I honestly examine my own heart, I must acknowledge that its inward corruptions and attachment to the things of time (while convinced of their utter vanity) remain unsubdued; that it is still as cold and insensible as ever to the influence of Divine love, and as incapable of adequately comprehending and appreciating the boundless nature and extent of the redeeming mercy of God through Jesus Christ. I do, indeed, my dear sister, often feel much discouraged on this account; and in comparing the present with the past, the only point, or nearly so, in which I can trace anything like an alteration for the better, or ground for encouragement, is, that since my heavy bereavement this day twelvemonths, I think I have ceased to expect or desire a place of rest on this side of eternity. Until then I could hardly have said so, except very occasionally; but how far this my state of mind from what constitutes a true disciple of Christ, I deeply feel and mourn. Am I not, however, my dear Sophia, in thus dwelling on the gloomy side of the picture, casting discouragement upon thee, whom I should esteem it one of my highest privileges to strengthen and encourage? I do, I trust, often feel not insensible to the mercy of the Giver of every good and perfect gift that He has been pleased yet to spare thee to me; and that, while thou art encouraging my feeble desire after that which is good, and warning me when my feet are about to slip, I have the clear and cheering evidence that thou art steadily advancing on thy own path towards "that city whose builder and maker is God." Under all the circumstances which have occurred during the last twelve months, it is a cause of thankfulness that the selfishness of sorrow for what has been taken away has not been permitted to destroy an interest in and sympathy for the sufferings of others; and though I know I am cold, indeed, to what I ought to be in this respect, I *hope* I am not increasingly so. But how difficult it is to keep the mind in that state in which, while thankful for the blessings vouchsafed, and for any

opportunity of being instruments of usefulness to others, we do not suffer any of these things to retard the 'working out of our own salvation with fear and trembling.'

When at times rather tempted to think one so insignificant as myself—such an atom in the boundless extent of creation—must be beneath the notice of Omnipotence, I have allowed myself to indulge the supposition (and I hope it is not inconsistent with the conviction that Christ Jesus is the source of all spiritual blessings, through whatever channels He may please to convey them) that, as ministering spirits are appointed to watch over every heir of salvation, those who loved us on earth, who are 'not lost, but gone before,' may have this office delegated to them till we are permitted to follow; and the possibility that this might be the case as regards my Eliza and our beloved Priscilla, has, I believe, had at least not a weakening effect on my mind. Perhaps, however, it is not safe to indulge much in such views.

Thine most affectionately,

JOSEPH STURGE.

We return now to the record of the further Anti-slavery labours on which Mr. Sturge soon became engaged. His attention had long been directed with painful interest to the state of feeling which prevailed in the United States of America on the subject of slavery. The enormous development of the cotton trade had applied such a stimulant to the national cupidity, as almost for a time utterly to smother the voice of conscience. Instead of that strong abhorrence with which the founders of the republic had regarded this sinister institution, a class of public men had arisen, who, not content even with the language of apology, had begun to assert the positive virtues of slavery, and that in a tone of coarse and insolent effrontery, which sought to overbear all opposition, and to drown the remonstrances alike of reason and of religion. And,

unhappily, among the foremost in this audacity of evil were the churches of America and their ministers. At a meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society, held at Birmingham in July 1836, Mr. Sturge spoke out with great earnestness on this question. A brief extract from his speech may not be unacceptable as a specimen of his style of speaking. Usually distinguished only by its simplicity and calm common sense, there were occasions when his intense moral indignation made him eloquent. His object is to show that the discussion of the subject of slavery was not out of place at a missionary meeting, since hardly any evil more obstructs the labours of those who are seeking to evangelise the world.

After dwelling at some length upon the demoralising influence of this system in America, he thus proceeds :—

'If we turn our eyes for a moment to poor unhappy Africa, we shall find that almost the whole of that continent may justly be said to be hermetically sealed against missionary efforts by this system, which, while it tears from its shores annually upwards of 100,000 victims, either to die amid all the horrors of the middle passage, or in hopeless unmitigated toil and bondage, is supposed to destroy two or three times that number in the internal wars fomented to the very heart of the Continent, and the march of the slaves to the coast, to supply the white man's slave ships from the Christian country. What opinion, I would ask (were we Africans), should we form of such Christians as these? Can we wonder that, instead of receiving them as the messengers of peace and glad tidings, they should consider them as cannibals, and not unfrequently commit self-destruction, under the supposition that they shall be devoured when they arrive at the port of their destination? It has indeed been justly said of this horrid system, that it has brought into unnatural combination the evils of two distinct orders of society, caused vices to coalesce which have

no natural affinity, and that in consequence of it, all that has been borne to Africa of the boasted improvements of civilised life has been a masterly skill in the contrivance, and an unhesitating daring in the commission, of crimes which the mind of the savage was too simple to devise, and his heart too gentle to execute. I think it will be unnecessary to say more to show how intimately connected with the extension of these and similar institutions, is the uprooting of slavery and its concomitant evils; and I ought to apologise for having occupied so much time, but before I sit down I wish to express what I believe to be the duty of Christians, whom God in His mercy may have placed under circumstances to see it in its proper light, towards their brethren not so favoured. Far be it from me to say that had I been surrounded by the same moral pestilence, and exposed to the same temptations, I should have been less guilty; and I know there are those who may think it a breach of charity to reprove Christian professors, much less Christian ministers, in anything but gentle and soothing language; but I believe there are circumstances in which while it is the most painful office of friendship, it is also the greatest proof of Christian love to such as these, to speak strongly and unequivocally, even if you know the first effect will be to give offence; for Christian professors are sometimes the most difficult to arouse to a sense of their own guilt. To whom was it that the God of love used the severest language when personally upon the earth? Not to the poor outcast of society, whatever his crimes might have been, but to the self-righteous highly-professing scribes and Pharisees; and such is the enormous guilt of the professing Christian Church in America, with regard to slavery, that if we were gifted with language powerful as an archangel, and strong and alarming as the most tempestuous billows of the Atlantic to the shipwrecked mariner, we ought to raise it to its highest emphasis on this occasion, under the persuasion that through the blessing of Heaven we should thus be most likely to encourage the faithful band of abolitionists, and carry dismay and ultimate conviction to their opponents—hasten the day of universal freedom, and

the period when Christians of all nations shall show by deeds, not words, that they consider every country as their country, and every man as their brother.'

Soon after this the Annual Conference of the Wesleyan Methodists was held at Birmingham. It had come to Mr. Sturge's knowledge, by communications received from a friend on the other side of the Atlantic, that the American Methodists were to be represented on that occasion by a minister—Rev. Dr. Fisk—who was a delegate from one of the most pro-slavery ecclesiastical bodies in the United States. He determined, therefore, to apprise the members of the Conference of the sort of fellowship into which they were about to be betrayed. He prepared an address in his own name, and sent a copy to every member of Conference, giving extracts from his friend's letter, describing the proceedings at the last General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Cincinnati, of which Dr. Fisk was the representative. It seems that two of the ministers belonging to that body had attended and spoken at an Anti-slavery meeting, and this was an inexpiable offence in the eyes of their brethren.

'Suffice it to say (continues the writer) that the Conference adopted a resolution by a vote of 140 to 14, reproving the two members who had attended the Anti-slavery meeting, and condemning modern Abolitionism. Some called the conduct of the two brethren under censure, "an utter contempt for, and outrage upon the general Conference." Abolitionism was called an "unhallowed flame." W. A. Smith, not only wished to God that Brother Scott (one of the culprits) was in heaven, but that the two members who were "guilty of *the damning iniquity*" of pleading for the slave, might be sharply rebuked before all the people. His wish was complied with.'

Dr. Fisk was one of the majority of 140 in the above proceedings.

'I would earnestly call upon you (said Mr. Sturge at the close of his appeal), as you regard your character with the Christian public, but far more by your obligations as Christians, to consider whether it is not your solemn duty to express your unequivocal censure of the above proceedings, and to strengthen the hands of your noble but persecuted brethren in that land who are immediate abolitionists.'

Dr. Fisk wrote a very angry reply, declaring that he was utterly opposed to slavery, denying that there was any such party as a pro-slavery party existing in the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, and charging Mr. Sturge with 'bearing false witness against his neighbours.' To this Mr. Sturge responded by publishing extracts from an address signed by five Wesleyan ministers in America, declaring that 'there were hundreds of the ministers and thousands of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who held the bodies and souls of men, women, and children—many of whom are members of the same church with themselves—in abject slavery, and still retain their standing without any censure on this account.' To which he added an extract from a reply to the above, in which the writers, without attempting to deny the facts alleged, enter upon an elaborate apology for the slave-holding churches. This reply was signed by several Methodist ministers, at the head of whom was the name of the Rev. Dr. Fisk himself. We know not what reception this gentleman met with at the Conference, but it is very certain that this decided proceeding on the part of Mr. Sturge had a lasting effect in making the pro-slavery ministers of America very wary of seeking intercourse with the Christian churches of this country.

Meanwhile the friends of the slave were watching with great anxiety the effect that might be produced in

the colonies by the Act of Emancipation. The West Indians had indulged in the most ominous forebodings, predicting that the advent of freedom would be the signal for rioting and bloodshed and universal idleness. Their prognostications were utterly belied by the events. The conduct of the slaves was admirable. On August 1, 1834, the day on which the act came into operation, instead of breaking out into drunkenness and revel, they had crowded into the churches and chapels, and had awaited the great hour of their deliverance 'hushed in silent prayer.' Nor did the good tidings that reached their friends stop there. Month after month brought additional intelligence of the steadiness and industry with which they betook themselves to labour, as well as of their general good behaviour. 'It is impossible,' said Lord Stanley, 'that matters can be better than in the focus of danger—Jamaica, except it be in Antigua.' To the same effect was the testimony of the Marquis of Sligo, then Governor of Jamaica, in a despatch to the Colonial Office :—

'Many of the attorneys and managers have been so very loud in their assertions of the failure of the system, that they are now unwilling to admit the errors of their opinion. The first prophecy was blood and destruction on the 1st of August; in this they were wrong. The second, that this scene would take place at Christmas; in this they were wrong. The third, that the apprentices would not work for wages; in this they were wrong, as I know of no instance in which the usual wages were offered and were refused. The fourth was that the crop would not be taken off; in this they were wrong, as it has in many cases been taken off much earlier than usual, and if protracted in others, it has been as much from the weather and the refusal to give wages in many instances, as from any other cause.'

But when the other side of the question came to be

looked into, the result was far less satisfactory. The Act of Emancipation recited that on the 1st of August, 1834, 'slavery shall cease and be unlawful in the British colonies, plantations, and possessions.' But, owing to the apprenticeship clause, this proved to be a mere delusion and mockery. The English nation had paid down their twenty millions for the negro's freedom, but the negro was not free. The use of the lash, indeed, as a stimulant to labour in the field was abolished, but 'in no other respect whatever was his condition improved—in many it was very much worse.'* Never, indeed, was there a greater fraud practised upon a generous people, than that practised on the British people by the so-called Emancipation Act; for not only did it retain slavery in all its worst features seven years after the day on which it professed to enact that it should 'cease and be unlawful,' but it actually contained provisions by which it might be perpetuated to a period far beyond the stipulated seven years. In the imperial act *itself*, and not in any subordinate one in the West Indies, there was formally established a power to punish a slave *in time* to an extent not exceeding seven years *after the expiration of the apprenticeship*; also to apprentice children under six years of age till they were one-and-twenty, if declared to be insufficiently provided for. This extraordinary authority was vested in the hands of *one* magistrate, often interested in acting upon its provisions.† And when to this came to be added the various acts passed by the Colonial Legislature under the pretence of carrying into effect the imperial law, but designed, in fact, to increase to the utmost the power of the master, it will be easy

* Lord Brougham's speech in the House of Lords, February 1838.

† Riland's *Letter to Lord Glenelg*, p. 11.

to understand what a mere sham the liberty of the slave came to be. An analysis of the Jamaica Act, for instance, was drawn up by a barrister, and exhibited the following result :—

'The legal position of the negro in Jamaica is this :—he is nominally subject only to gratuitous labour for his master for forty-five hours in the week, and to certain disabilities for public offices, which were considered incompatible with his dependent condition. But in fact, he remains an *emancipated prisoner* on the plantation to which he is attached; substantially liable to the same punishments and labouring under the same incapacities as heretofore. He cannot quit the estate, even during his own hours, without fear of punishment. He cannot dance with his children or associate with his neighbours without punishment. He cannot complain to the magistrate or remonstrate with the master without risk of a flogging for "insolence," or "unjustifiable" absence. The whip follows him at every step, imprisonment and hard labour wait him at every turn. His home is converted into a prison, and the plantation into a prison-yard; and, as if to prevent the possibility of his forgetting the custody in which his apprenticeship places him, penal gangs patrol the estate, and bilboes are constructed in every village.* Notwithstanding the reiterated provisions of the Colonial Acts, affecting to guarantee to him the undisturbed enjoyment of the time emphatically called his own, the machinery of those acts is

* Of the extent and severity of the punishments inflicted some idea may be formed from the following statement, by the Rev. James F. M. Phillippo, of what took place in Jamaica during that miserable episode in its history :—'During the short period of two years, 60,000 apprentices received, in the aggregate, one quarter of a million of lashes, and 50,000 other punishments by the tread-wheel, the chain-gang, and other means of legal torture; so that, instead of a diminution, there was a frightful addition to the miseries of the negro population, inducing a degree of discontent and exasperation among them never manifested under the previous system; and which, but for the influence exerted by the Governor, the missionaries, and some of the special magistrates, would, in all probability, have broken out into open and general rebellion.'

so contrived that he may, if he has once absented himself without permission, be legally worked for forty-two hours, in uninterrupted succession, and then dismissed with a flogging if he ventures to complain.'

With such powers as these in their hands, and with the old habit of tyranny strong upon them, we need not wonder that rumours soon began to reach this country of the frightful severity with which the apprenticeship was being worked by the planters and their subordinates. Many of the stipendiary magistrates, paid by this country as the official guardians of the negro, had become the mere tools of the planter; while those of them, of whom there was a considerable number, who had the integrity and boldness to raise their voice against the systematic frustration of the intentions of the imperial parliament, were driven by incessant persecution to resign their commission in disgust.

The friends of the slave had taken measures early to call the attention of the Government to these facts. In the beginning of 1835, parliament not being then in session, a most elaborate memorial, containing a full statement of the case as well as a masterly analysis of the obnoxious Colonial Acts, was presented to Lord Glenelg, who was at that time Colonial Secretary, on behalf of the Anti-slavery and Abolition Societies of the United Kingdom. When parliament assembled, it was expected that some decided steps would be taken by the leaders of the party in the House of Commons. Mr. Sturge went up to London, and remained there a considerable time, working indefatigably to secure for them such support from without as would enable them to present a bold front to the Government when they came to demand, as he hoped they would, the im-

mediate abolition of the apprenticeship. In a letter to his sister he writes :—

London : 6th month, 18th, 1835.

'My dear Sister,—I find myself so much better in health than I have been during my former visits to London that, great as would be the comfort of having thy company, I do not see it necessary for thee to make the sacrifice of coming up, particularly as I fear thy health might suffer, and Anti-slavery matters may take a turn which may enable me suitably to leave earlier than I expected. Buxton will, we believe, be able to bring forward his motion to-morrow night. But we quite anticipate he will be in a minority, though a respectable one. If this should be the case, it is proposed to have a public meeting at Exeter Hall on 4th day (and we have engaged the Hall conditionally for the purpose), and to appeal to the country to support Buxton in a motion forthwith to abolish the apprenticeship, nothing short of which he now seems determined to accept. We send down to-night to the delegates to hold themselves in readiness to come up at a short notice to go in a body, as we did before, to the Colonial Office. From what I hear of the number of letters sent up to members, I hope there is still more interest felt in the country on the subject than we at one time expected. Dr. Greville writes from Edinburgh this morning : "Immediately on the receipt of your despatch to my brother secretary, Mr. Ogilvy, we drew up a set of *strong decided* resolutions, which, being unanimously agreed to, were published in the 'North British Advertiser,' which has a large circulation, and communicated by myself to our two representatives. The speaker, of course, can do little or nothing; but Sir John Campbell writes me word that he will decidedly support our views." Two letters from one of the missionaries of the Scottish Missionary Society have been sent to the missionary committee here, filled with statements and complaints of the mal-administration of the Emancipation Bill. Copies have been forwarded to the Colonial Office and to Mr. Buxton. If his motion be not agreed to, it will be absolutely necessary

for every friend of the negro to buckle on his harness once more. I wrote to Charles yesterday suggesting the propriety of a meeting on 2nd day of some of our Anti-slavery friends. I hope on 7th day night to be able to let you know the course things are likely to take. In the parcel there will be circulars for J. A. James, William Marsh, and Captain Moorson as delegates.'

The motion of Mr. Buxton, to which this letter refers, was for a select committee to enquire whether the conditions on which the twenty millions had been granted for the abolition of slavery had been complied with. The motion was brought forward on the 19th of June. But unhappily, on some vague general assurance being given by the Government that great vigilance had been exercised, and would continue to be exercised, on behalf of the newly emancipated people, he consented to withdraw it. That he acted on this, as on all occasions, from a conscientious conviction of right, no one will for a moment question. But certainly many of his friends, and of the friends of the slave, were bitterly disappointed and discouraged. Turning away, therefore, from parliament, in which they began to fear there was no help, they appealed once more to the country. On the 14th of October in the same year, a large meeting was held at the Town Hall, Birmingham —for as the Anti-slavery agitation now began to revolve more and more around Joseph Sturge as its master-spirit, Birmingham became naturally to a large extent the centre of operations. At this meeting a memorial to Lord Melbourne was adopted, in which the conduct of the planters in trying to the utmost of their power to defeat the provisions of the Emancipation Act, after pocketing the twenty millions paid by the nation for the redemption of the slaves, was characterised as

'a practical and deliberate fraud.' The memorialists, utterly repudiating all further dependence upon the intention or power of the colonists to establish a policy of justice and mercy with an ultimate view to the abolition of slavery, 'distinctly stated their conviction that nothing short of the entire emancipation of the slave from every restraint, except such as may be, and is, equally imposed upon the white population, will effectually destroy or even materially alleviate the oppressions of the colonial system.' On February 1, 1836, another large meeting was held at Birmingham on the same subject, at which Mr. Sturge made an able statement, sustained and illustrated by copious extracts from private letters and documents received from the West Indies, showing the fearful suffering to which the negroes were subjected under the apprenticeship system. In a report of the meeting, which was published in the form of a pamphlet for general circulation, we are told 'that the close of this address, and above all the touching manner of its delivery, produced a most powerful effect upon the meeting.' Mr. Angell James, who was the next speaker, began by saying that, 'after the horrifying details they had just heard read to them, and the truly tender eloquence with which those details had been followed and supported by that excellent friend of all that was good, Mr. Joseph Sturge, what remained for that meeting to do but to rise, and with one heart and voice to demand the immediate abolition of the last remains of negro slavery.' The impression produced by these and other speeches was still further deepened by an address of extraordinary power from Daniel O'Connell, whose fidelity to the cause of the slave never faltered for an instant during his long and stormy public career. Thus Birmingham, which, so far back as

the year 1830, was the first, under the instigation of Joseph Sturge, to give public utterance to the demand for 'immediate emancipation,' has the honour also of having been the first under the same guidance to declare open war against that system of cruelty and fraud which was attempted to be palmed upon the people of England as a substitute for emancipation.

But there was one very formidable obstacle in the way of the British abolitionists in their assaults upon the apprenticeship system. That was the extreme difficulty, owing to the social tyranny that prevailed in the Colonies, of procuring the evidence of producible witnesses. They were in this embarrassing condition that, while constant communications reached them describing in indignant terms the injustice and cruelty practised on the negro, they were accompanied with such injunctions of secresy as rendered them comparatively valueless for all practical purposes.

'It is necessary to warn our friends,' wrote an official resident in the West Indies, 'against giving publicity to any correspondence with persons here. You will be plied by many insidious persons from hence; who, under pretence of friendliness to the cause, will seek to know the sources of your information to destroy those who correspond with you. Let me request you, therefore, to be watchful, and never to show your letters. Copy out the information if you will; but let them know nothing of names and persons.' *

But it is obvious that such anonymous testimony would be of little avail against watchful, adroit, unscrupulous adversaries, such as the West Indians had ever proved themselves to be. It was under these circumstances that Joseph Sturge adopted the bold determination of paying a personal visit to the West

* Riland's *Letter*, p. 11.

Indies, to investigate the case for himself. He had been deeply moved unquestionably by the details which were continually reaching him of the miserable condition of the negroes under the new law. But what weighed with him probably even more than this was the fear that the planters and Colonial legislatures, taking advantage of those dangerous provisions in the Law of Emancipation already referred to, would employ the *interim* state of apprenticeship in forging a system of restraint and coercion that should absolutely defeat the purposes of the Abolition Act, and retain the whole, or at least the rising generation of negroes, in a servile and oppressed condition little differing from slavery, for an indefinite period. Through his intercourse with Dr. Philip, Mr. Sturge had already become acquainted with the insidious manner in which laws enacted under the influence of a dominant class might be brought to bear upon the destinies of a remote and friendless people. In the volume published by him and his colleague on their return from the West Indies, we find a significant reference to this South African precedent. Commenting upon a law affecting the negroes which had been passed by one of the Colonial legislatures, they say :—

'It is impossible to be too jealous of laws like these. We cannot forget the condition a few years since of the Hottentots at the Cape; who, nominally free, were reduced by a single injurious ordinance to a state of villanage, which left them at the mercy of a ruthless task-master, without giving them any protection even in his self-interest—a state which exposed them to the exactions of slavery without its slender indulgences—to its worst horrors without any of its mitigations.'

Such were the motives which prompted Joseph Sturge to undertake his West India mission. It was

a much more formidable enterprise than it may now appear. He had never before crossed the seas except to Ireland; ocean-steamers were then unknown. The voyage was of uncertain length and of considerable peril. The dangers of the climate were not small, according to common apprehension. But most of all were there reasonable grounds of fear from the intense enmity which the white population of the colonies were suppose to cherish toward all who presumed to meddle with their domestic institution. Only five or six years had elapsed since the missionaries in Jamaica had been first mobbed, then driven with gross outrage and violence from the islands, and their chapels burnt in open day. It was amid such scenes and such men that Mr. Sturge went calmly forth to carry forward an investigation, the results of which, it was well known, would jeopardise both the reputation and the fancied pecuniary interests of the planters. When his determination to cross the Atlantic on this mission of mercy became known, his fellow-citizens of Birmingham met and presented him with an address full of sympathy and encouragement, proving that for once, at least, the proverb did not hold good, that a prophet is not without honour save in his own country. Though no man ever less courted publicity or applause, we cannot doubt that this spontaneous testimony of regard from those who daily saw his manner of life, and were best qualified to estimate his character, must have been gratifying to his feelings on the eve of such an enterprise. And no less so, we may be sure, was the following cordial and affectionate letter addressed to him on the same occasion by his eminent friend and fellow-townsman, the Rev. John Angell James:—

Edgbaston, October 1.

'MY DEAR FRIEND,—Although, in consequence of being on the eve of a journey, I am much pressed for time, I cannot forward to you the enclosed general recommendation, to be used as you may think proper in America, without expressing in writing, what I have already given utterance to in conversation, my best wishes for the success of your benevolent mission, your personal health and comfort, and your safe return to the circle of friends by whom you are held in the bonds of affectionate esteem. It has been in my heart to have solicited, as far as your own views of the subject would allow, that I might be permitted not only to pray for, but with you, before you left this neighbourhood. That opportunity, however, is now gone by, and all that remains is that I commend you to the guidance, protection, and grace of God in my own Christ.—This I shall not fail to do, nor to entreat for you a deep and comfortable sense of the presence of Him who is equally near to His people upon the sea and upon the dry land—in a foreign country and upon their native soil. May the God whose you are, and whom you serve, be your sun and your shield; may the angel of the covenant go with you; and the Lord Jesus be with your spirit. 'Behold He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper, the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth and even for ever more' (Psalm cxxi). May these beautiful and comfortable words be all fulfilled to the letter in your experience. May you have no reason to doubt that you have been moved by an infallible Guide to undertake this mission; and may such be its results to the cause of suffering humanity as shall convince even the incredulity of affection, and exchange in the minds of some, whose love made them unwilling to surrender you, the joyful approval for the silent and tearful acquiescence. May God prepare your way before you, and command for you the hearts, both of the friends and foes of

your mission. May he give you access to sources of information which shall further your designs and assist you in the accomplishment of your object; and so direct your own mind and those to be associated with you, as that you may be preserved from everything that would defeat your purpose. In the midst of difficulties may He give you the spirit of wisdom, and in the face of opposition, and when surrounded by discouragement, the spirit of might. Be yours the peace that passeth understanding, and the rejoicing of a good conscience. Should your mission fail, may you be submissive and content; should it succeed, and you should return followed by the tears of negroes' joy, to be greeted by the plaudits of the negroes' friends in this country, may you be humble as well as thankful. Peace be in your mind, health in your body, love and harmony among the friends that accompany you. Again, I say, the Lord that executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed be with you, to assist, protect, prosper, and bless you. Amen.

'Such, my dear friend, are, and will be the prayers on your behalf of

'Your sincere and affectionate friends,

'J. A. James,

'A. M. James.'

Mr. Sturge was very little addicted to analyse and register his own feelings, and hence it is that we have but few and rare glimpses into his inner life. But there are two short scraps of paper remaining, one written in contemplation of his West India journey, and the other in the midst of it, which afford us a passing insight into the spirit of profound humility and dependence upon divine guidance by which he was actuated at the time. The first is under date of August 2, 1836:—

'My forty-third birthday. I have been reading this morning the closing scene of my precious Eliza's life, and, in looking

back on my own progress since that awful event, I am deeply discouraged in the persuasion that my advance towards that kingdom where she is for ever at rest has been all but imperceptible. The world, in some shape or other, is diverting my attention from the one thing needful; and though I know its utter vanity, and desire not to find a resting-place this side of eternity, yet so desperately wicked and deceitful is my heart that I am ready at times to despair that it ever can be washed in the blood of Christ. Lord, increase my faith in Thee and love towards Thee, and grant that my sole desire may be to serve Thee. In the important prospect which I have long had before me of a visit to the West Indies, grant that I may be guided by Thy counsel, and directed either to go or to stay, as it may be most likely to promote Thy glory and the welfare of Thy suffering creatures; but I feel unworthy to be employed even to hand the cup of cold water in the name of a disciple.'

The second is dated 'Barbados,' 1 of 1st month, 1837:—

'I have now been several weeks on this side of the Atlantic, and, in conjunction with my friend Thomas Harvey, have been endeavouring to collect information in reference to the condition of the poor negroes in the colonies. May God grant that it may issue in some benefit to them! but I have felt such a sense of weakness in myself, and such inability to approach my heavenly Father in prayer, that it seems very unreasonable to expect any good can be effected through such an unworthy instrument. If I should yet go mourning on my way, grant, O most merciful Saviour, just enough of the light of Thy countenance to prevent my casting away my confidence in Thee.'

On their return, he and his colleague published a volume of great value, entitled 'The West Indies in 1837,' the first edition of which was sold in a few months.

In selecting Mr. Thomas Harvey as his companion in this journey, Mr. Sturge was happy in having found one who entered with hearty sympathy into the objects of his mission, and was able to second his researches efficiently. Happily, we are able to present to our readers the records of that eventful journey, or as much of them as it is deemed necessary to introduce here, from the pen of this gentleman, who kindly consented, at the request of the biographer, to prepare the following narrative of the visit to the West Indies.

CHAPTER VII.

VISIT TO THE WEST INDIES.

Intercourse with West India Planters on board Ship—Mr. Sturge's Fidelity of Rebuke—He and his Friends reach Barbados—Proceed thence to Antigua—Mysterious Disappearance of a Packet of Letters—Spent a Month at Antigua, which had already passed an Act of Emancipation—Inquiry into its Effects—Testimony of Dr. Nugent, Speaker of the Assembly—Satisfactory Results of the Act—Return to Barbados—But touch first at Montserrat—State of that Island—Then at Dominica—And at Martinique—Baron de Mackau, the Governor—St. Lucia—Sir John Jeremie, the 'Père Président'—Reach Barbados—Description of the Island—Ungenerous Conduct of the Planters—Oppressive Operation of the Apprenticeship System—Fearful Prison Cruelties—Insidious Scheme for Apprenticing of young free Children—Travellers proceed to Jamaica—Investigations there among all Classes of Men—Visits various Missionary Stations—Affecting Interview with the Rector of St. Ann's Bay—Brown's Town and Rev. John Clark—Negro Manager of an Estate—Falmouth and Montego Bay—Rev. Messrs. Burchell and Knibb—Arcadia and Rev. John Vine—Lucia and Rev. Mr. Stainsby, &c.—Results of Investigation—Few resident Proprietors—Character of Overseers and Book-keepers—Stipendiary Magistrates—Number and Severity of Punishments—The Tread-mills—Drunken Magistrate—Capricious Tyranny of the Overseers—Summary of the Effects of the Apprenticeship System.

Joseph Sturge and his companions embarked at Falmouth, on board the 'Skylark' mail-packet, for Barbados, on November 17, 1836. The voyage was performed with favourable weather in twenty-seven days. All the other passengers were connected with the West Indies, several of them being influential planters of Trinidad, Barbados, and St. Vincent. The

objects of the anti-slavery party were well known on board, but the shyness that prevailed at first between them and their fellow-voyagers soon disappeared, and much agreeable intercourse ensued. It was gratifying to find that West India planters were by no means necessarily pro-slavery. As regards foreign countries, indeed, the prevailing opinion on board appeared to be soundly abolitionist! Our own colonies, it was confessed, were enjoying unwonted prosperity. The anticipated losses for which compensation had been paid were postponed at least to the era of complete emancipation, a period that most on board professed to regard with apprehension.

One of Joseph Sturge's associates relates a pleasing instance, slight but significant, of his fidelity to duty. He was seated on deck one day, when several of the other passengers were pacing its narrow limits for exercise. One of these, a fine old gentleman of the old school, had been in the army and present at the capture of Trinidad, and had subsequently settled as a planter in that island. From early habit he was addicted to the irreverent use of the sacred name. Joseph Sturge, who had appeared absorbed in thought, suddenly said to his friend. 'I must speak to that old man.' He rose and joined him in his walk. They took several turns together and separated. Marked respect and increased cordiality from the individual whom he had thus gently admonished were the result of this conference.

The 'Skylark' came to an anchor in Carlisle Bay, opposite Bridgetown, Barbados, late in the evening of December 12. The island was suffering from an epidemic fever, which, with other considerations, induced a change of plan. Instead of remaining together at Barbados for the purpose of their visit, Joseph Sturge

decided to proceed in the next mailboat, accompanied by Thomas Harvey, to Antigua and the Leeward Islands, while John Scoble and Dr. Lloyd intended a few days later to depart for the important colonies of British Guiana. Accordingly Joseph Sturge and his companion embarked in the afternoon of the 14th on board the 'Sword-fish' schooner, and on the 18th they landed at St. John's, Antigua.

One of the passengers on board the 'Sword-fish' was a colonist of Demerara, a man of polite and insinuating address, who was engaged in visiting the smaller colonies and buying up the indentures of such negro apprentices as he could induce to transfer themselves to him to be conveyed to Guiana. Here was the coolie traffic in embryo. This individual admitted that his operations were regarded with much jealousy both by white and black in the islands, yet he appeared to meet with some success among the non-predial apprentices of petty and impoverished proprietors. An odd misadventure befell our friends on board this little vessel, in the loss of a parcel containing the whole of their letters of introduction. Due search was made for it, and everybody on board interrogated, but without avail. This parcel, except a very few letters that were never recovered; was afterwards restored to them on their first landing in Jamaica. It had been doubtless examined and then very considerately mailed to Kingston, where, through the courtesy of the deputy post-master, it was restored to its proper owners without charge. No inconvenience was experienced by the travellers from the absence of the usual credentials.

Joseph Sturge and his companion spent nearly a month in Antigua. The legislature of this island had rejected the apprenticeship, and had preferred passing

at once a measure of complete emancipation, which took effect on August 1, 1834. Among the causes that, under the guidance of Divine Providence, contributed to this happy result, may be reckoned the energetic influence of the governor, Sir Evan M'Gregor, the humane impulses of many members of the assembly and council, and, lastly, a shrewd, arithmetical calculation that estates could be cultivated at less cost by free than by slave labour. It was of the highest interest to Joseph Sturge to ascertain how far this bold and generous policy had succeeded, and to compare its fruits with the results of the system of apprenticeship. The enquiry was pursued with zeal and diligence through every available channel. The visitors obtained interviews with the Lieut.-governor Colonel Light, the president of council, and the speaker of the assembly; they listened to the debates in the latter body, watched the trials in the Court of Assize, conversed with the chief justice on the statistics of crime, inspected the jails and attended the police courts. They visited the churches, chapels, mission-stations, and schools. They obtained access to estates in various parts of the island, and made careful comparative estimates of the cost of cultivation. They discussed the social and economical interests of the colony with intelligent persons of every grade in society, and with all the aid they could obtain on the spot they pursued the comparison between slavery and freedom. The general result can scarcely be better given than in the statements made by Dr. Nugent the Speaker of the House of Assembly, himself a scientific agriculturist, and one of the most enlightened men of his day. Fifteen years before he had abolished the use of the whip on the estates under his control, and with a wise foresight as well as praiseworthy humanity, when the crisis came,

in the debates of the island legislature, he threw his weighty influence into the scale on behalf of immediate freedom.

'The comparative improvements,' said Dr. Nugent, 'in the condition of the rural population are not to be enumerated. They are not flogged or locked up. They are free to go or stay. They receive money wages, while they retain all their old privileges, except the allowances of food and clothing. The people are much more easily and pleasantly governed. The proprietor has less cark and care, less bodily and mental fatigue, and infinitely less annoyance of all descriptions. Every difficulty used to be referred to him, constant disputes were to be settled, as to the work to be done by females, &c. No one can conceive the annoyance engendered by the old system, in addition to which the obloquy thrown upon the planters was become almost insupportable. All this was swept away by emancipation. *He did not believe there was a man in the colony who could lay his hand upon his heart and say he would wish to return to the old state of things.*'

As regards the cost of cultivation and the interests of the proprietors,

'The saving is great in those cases where the slaves were supported entirely on imported supplies, and less where they were fed on rations of ground provisions grown upon the estate. A purchasing and consuming population was beginning to be formed within the island itself. The sale of ground provisions, molasses, &c., to their labourers is already become a source of profit to estates. The reduction of medical expenses is considerable; the estate hospitals have become useless. On a Monday morning, during slavery, the doctor would find eight, ten, or even twenty in the sick-house; now he has comparatively nothing to do. He is paid one-third less per head than before, but his duties have diminished in a much greater ratio.

'Before emancipation some estates were eaten up by their over-population. On one belonging to a relative of his, with

320 slaves, the saving effected by reducing the number of negroes had been immense. In such cases there had been generally some legal impediment to the transfer or sale of the superfluous hands. Several properties in this situation were on the point of being abandoned. Nothing could have saved them but a legislative measure of emancipation. On the whole, estates had increased in value, and the proprietary body was more prosperous than before. But there were important exceptions. A few estates had been disorganised, if not ruined, by the change; but in most instances, if not all, this can be traced to the harsh and injudicious conduct of the owners or their agents.

'The *economical* advantages of free labour were only beginning to be felt. Every estate maintained its full complement of labourers both in and out of crop. The island could never realise the full benefits of the new system till there were independent villages, which to the planter would be as reservoirs of surplus labour, enabling him to employ many or few hands, according to his actual wants. A diminished supply of human labour would stimulate improvement in the use of implements and animals.'

The statements of Dr. Nugent were confirmed by enquiries in many other directions, of which the details are copiously given in 'The West Indies in 1837.'

In this colony, then, the transition from slavery to freedom had been peacefully effected in a single day. No tumult or riot ensued, but the memorable change was ushered in by the attendance of divine worship, and by hymns of praise to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. Labour went on as before, and no more peaceful or orderly community was anywhere to be found in the world than the population of Antigua. They were, it is true, in a transition state, and had for the present little choice but to continue to labour at the very low rate of one shilling currency ($5\frac{1}{2}d.$ sterling),

which had been fixed by a general agreement or combination of the planters. The aged, worn-out, and diseased labourers were partially supported by the estates on which they had spent their youth and strength; but, on the whole, especially at this time of drought and dearth, much suffering and destitution prevailed among this class. The administration of the law, in cases of complaint (not very numerous in the aggregate) between employer and labourer, leaned oppressively against the weaker party. The moral and social evils of slavery had not suddenly disappeared; even its traditions of plantation management in the field and in the boiling-house still held sway; but a principle had been introduced which, silently, gradually, and peacefully, was restoring its rights to labour, introducing a just and equal regard to the claims of all classes, and removing the mental fetters which had oppressed the faculties and powers both of masters and slaves. Competition was already breaking through the combination to depress wages.

So far from emancipation having imperilled the interests of the colony, it was plain that this beneficent measure had shielded its proprietary from the ruin which threatened them, from the drought and other adverse visitations.

In the appendix to 'The West Indies in 1837,' under the head 'Antigua,' are discussed a variety of important topics connected with the welfare of this colony. Nothing was regarded with more jealous vigilance by Joseph Sturge, than the spirit of its legislation as affecting the labouring class. In a searching analysis of laws, then recently enacted, the tendency to treat the labourer as a serf of the soil is detected, and a protest is entered against the creation of new barriers between

the several classes of society. It is scarcely to be doubted that the timely utterance of a righteous testimony in this matter has borne good fruit. In their printed volume, the travellers are warm in their expressions of gratitude for the courtesy with which they were everywhere received in Antigua.

Having accomplished the object of their visit to Antigua, Joseph Sturge chartered a small schooner to carry his companion and himself back to Barbados, touching at several islands on their way. A single night's voyage landed the travellers at Montserrat. In this small and poverty-stricken colony, they found a number of superior and intelligent men, who readily supplied the information they were in search of. A measure to abolish the remainder of the apprenticeship had been before the legislature, and was lost by only a single vote. Hereupon, five proprietors had voluntarily emancipated their negroes. Their estates were efficiently cultivated, and the industry of the negro, when working for wages as a freeman, was universally admitted. Two or three years before his death, Joseph Sturge purchased a large abandoned sugar estate on this island, in order to test in the most practical manner his conviction, that by fair and just treatment of the native labourers, sugar could be profitably produced, without the aid of the servile labour of Indian coolies. He did not survive to witness the completion of his plans in reference to this property, but not long before his decease he expressed to the writer his regret that he had not taken the same step earlier, and his belief that he would thereby have advanced the objects he had at heart in the West Indies, more than by much labour and expenditure in other directions.

In their next voyage, the travellers in their little

schooner encountered a perilous storm. Their friends at Montserrat gave them up for lost; but, through the protecting care of a merciful Providence, after tossing about two days, with some damage to the ship, they reached Roseau, the capital and port of Dominica, on the 19th. This island was originally French, and they found the French language and Roman Catholic religion still prevalent. The Anglican rector and Wesleyan missionaries were, however, active, and found scope for their efforts. Coffee had been a chief staple of the colony, but its production was rapidly declining from the effects of blight. A numerous class of small coloured proprietors were greatly impoverished by this cause. The sugar estates were maintaining their average production. The negroes were found in a far less advanced condition than those of Antigua; and drunkenness, rare in the latter island, was here and also at Montserrat a prevailing vice, the pernicious appetite being fostered, if not created, by the practice of giving drams of spirits to the labourer in damp weather, and for extra work. The apprenticeship system was too generally employed on the more important estates, not as a time of preparation, but as a medium of coercion, with a reckless disregard of the future. To avoid repetition, details on this subject are reserved for consideration in connection with the larger colonies.

The travellers were exceedingly impressed with the wild and magnificent scenery of Dominica, 'a land of mist and rainbows, and mountain torrents.' One of their excursions was to the Souffriere, from whence an exportation of sulphur has occasionally taken place. They also visited a few of the French Creole planters on their mountain properties, and found here and there among them delightful evidences of a genial and

humane spirit. A recently deceased proprietor of this class had systematically instructed his negroes with the intention to set them free, but died before he had overcome the obstacles interposed by the encumbrances on his estate. 'He used to present mothers with the freedom of their first child born in lawful wedlock, a measure attended with the happiest results.' Another old Frenchman of eighty-five, venerable as a patriarch, and dwelling as a father among his people, gave the visitors a hearty welcome, and his best wishes for the success of 'the good cause' of emancipation. On such properties as these there was a rapid increase of population. 'Nothing can be a greater contrast,' said the travellers, 'than the condition, appearance, and manners of the people on some of these properties of the old French residents, and of those on even the well-managed English estates.'* Decreasing numbers was the rule on the latter.

Some of the coloured inhabitants of Roseau were men of high intelligence, liberal sentiments, and public spirit. Much was to be anticipated from their influence on the future social progress of Dominica.

During his stay in Dominica, Joseph Sturge had put into his hands copies of several petitions to the French Chambers, for the immediate abolition of slavery, from certain free coloured inhabitants of Martinique. He, therefore, concluded to call at this island on the way to St. Lucia. The vessel touched first at the beautiful town of St. Pierre, where some hours were diligently spent in enquiry into the state of slavery on the island, and the progress of anti-slavery opinion. In the evening they proceeded to Fort Royal, the capital, and called

* *West Indies in* 1837, p. 99.

the next day on the governor, the Baron de Mackau, with whom they had a long and agreeable interview. The baron had not long before paid a visit to Antigua, and his mind was evidently occupied with the great question. From his mild and benevolent aspect, and the interest he expressed in the views presented to him, the travellers drew favourable auguries; yet when he afterwards filled the post of Minister of the Marine and Colonies under Guizot, he failed to give effect to the expectations of the friends of the slave. Martinique was affected in no slight degree by the important change in the adjacent British islands—property depreciated, and enterprise languished under the cloud of uncertainty that hung over the future of the French colonies, and the intentions of the home government. The escape of slaves across the twenty miles of sea, which separated Martinique from a British colony on either hand, was a constant source of loss, irritation, and expense, 2,000 soldiers and gendarmes being picketed in small parties over the island, to check depopulation from this cause. 'Of 3,000 slaves who have thus disappeared from Martinique, only 1,200 are accounted for as having reached the British islands (Dominica and St. Lucia), so that it would appear, nearly two-thirds perish in the attempt to regain freedom.' In one word, the French West Indies were groaning under evils which emancipation alone could remedy. All was ripe for the change but the government at home.

A night voyage from Martinique brought the travellers to Castries, in St. Lucia, situated on the fine and spacious harbour of that name. St. Lucia resembles Dominica in its grand and varied mountain scenery, and prodigal luxuriance of vegetable life,

as well as in its social aspects and the general prevalence of the language and religion of France. An influential resident assured the visitors that 'not a ray of light had reached the island from any of the religious or benevolent societies of Great Britain.' In its industrial state and prospects it had also much in common with Dominica; but St. Lucia had recently been the scene of the labours of the late Sir John Jeremie, who, as President of its Royal Court, had left the impress of his genius and force of character on the institutions and destinies of the colony. Long before an Encumbered Estates' Court was thought of for Ireland, he had conceived and carried into effect such a measure in this island, and had thereby removed the greatest obstacle to its future prosperity. Many important public works were begun and perfected through his influence. Even his opponents were now willing to honour his character by confessing him 'the greatest man who ever came to St. Lucia;' while his humane and upright administration gained him among the negroes the appellation of 'Père Président.'

Leaving St. Lucia, Joseph Sturge and his companions reached Bridgetown, Barbados, on December 28, and spent a fortnight on this interesting island, which presented then, as it does still, an example of agricultural prosperity unequalled in the West Indies. Besides supporting its own dense population, Barbados exported at this time sugar to the annual value of three-quarters of a million sterling. The surface of the island is varied, and runs up towards the north into rocky and broken hills.

Though it has no pretensions to the magnificent scenery and redundant forest and parasitical vegetation of the mountainous islands, it has in great perfection

a beauty of its own—that of art and high cultivation. Every available acre being tilled by the direct application of human labour, the rural parts exhibit an endless succession of fields of sugar-cane, guinea-corn, maize, yams, eddoes, and the sweet-potato, thickly interspersed with wind-mills, sugar-works, mansions, and the villages of the negroes.

Barbados possessed, at this time, a numerous and wealthy resident proprietary, and abundance of religious and educational institutions in a state of considerable efficiency. Strangely enough, its material prosperity has been traced to 'an exhausted soil.' Towards the close of last century, 'by repeated croppings, the soil of Barbados had become so much worn as to be almost unproductive in the sugar-cane; but by the substitution of other crops, particularly guinea-corn, a system of soiling and tethering cattle was introduced, which has not only been the means of retrieving the lands, but has, perhaps, made them more productive than ever.' * Wonderful as the productive energies of the colony appeared in 1836, it is well-known they have since very greatly increased under the system of free-labour, of the success of which Barbados is a signal example. It possesses no advantage now that it did not possess then, free-labour only excepted.

The wealthy and unencumbered planters of this island were, however, less influenced by humane and generous feeling than their brethren in Antigua. They submitted with the worst possible grace to the imperial policy, and their legislature was the last to pass an act to give effect to the abolition of slavery. No voice was raised in favour of rejecting the apprenticeship, in order to enter at once on complete emancipation, though no

* Dr. Nugent's *Report of Antigua Agricultural Association.*

colony was so favourably situated for carrying into effect so humane and just a measure. Soon after the new order of things had commenced, an attempt was made to bring the children under six years old, who were free by the Imperial Act, under a contract of apprenticeship until they had attained adult age. By this means a servile condition of a large proportion of the labouring class would have been perpetuated. The parents strenuously resisted this scheme, and were encouraged in their resistance by the Governor, Sir Lionel Smith. In their anger and disappointment many planters turned the free children off the estates; and though this policy was not long persevered in on the broad scale, the same cruel measure was frequently adopted by individuals.

During slavery the care of infant children had been sedulously attended to, as one of the most important details of plantation management. Very few, in proportion to the whole number, were the properties on which the same care of infant life continued; and, in general, the children were barely tolerated to live with their parents. The mortality among them had, consequently, been very great since 1834. The boon of freedom granted to the helpless infants had been made a source of misery and bitter persecution to the negro mothers.*

The Appendix to 'The West Indies in 1837,' under the head 'Barbados,' contains copious details of the working of the apprenticeship system, and need only be consulted to prove how irritating and oppressive it was in the very nature of things, as well as from the infirm and partial conduct of its administrators. Ex-

* *West Indies in* 1837, p. 123, and *passim.*

cessive mulcts of time, the negroes' Saturdays, were the prevailing penalty; and the apprentices, male and female, were often brought before the magistrate, not singly, but in gangs, and fined three, four, or six of their 'Saturdays' for the benefit of the estates. The gaol and treadmill were also freely used to coerce labour; and for such offences as 'linen badly washed and impertinence; doing only half as much in potato-hoeing one day as they did the day before,' women were sentenced to 'seven days treadmill, first class,' and had their hair close-cropped as if they had been criminals of 'the first class.'

The moving force of the apprenticeship system was *physical coercion*, precisely the same as in absolute slavery, the difference being only this: that in slavery compulsory power was wielded by the master at his own will, while in the apprenticeship it was enforced through his influence and for his benefit by officers of the Government. The negro was told he was a slave no longer, and he was then driven to the field and compelled as effectually as before to render his unrequited toil for his master's benefit.

Besides the inevitable amount of friction created in due course of law, the system had numberless independent sources of irritation. If parents were refractory the free children were persecuted; complaining negroes had their goats and poultry killed; in some cases the houses of the people were pulled down and sheds erected in their stead, six feet by seven, just wide enough to come within the letter of the law requiring 'lodging' to provided, &c. &c.*

It will be remembered that the other members of

* *West Indies in* 1837, p. 125.

this exploring party, John Scoble and Dr. Lloyd, had remained two or three days in Barbados before proceeding to Demerara. They visited the gaol at Bridgetown, and witnessed scenes of cruelty and oppression which are too painful for the description to be reproduced here. In the short interval that had elapsed, Sir Evan M'Gregor, who had very lately assumed the government, had discovered and corrected some of the most flagrant evils. Yet on visiting the gaol a few weeks later, Joseph Sturge and his companion found it still teeming with abuses. Women and infirm aged men were put on the treadwheel, and if they could not keep step, were held on by their arms from above, the revolving wheel battering their tortured limbs. The prisoners' heads were all cropped close. In one room were twenty men, who had been tried and found 'not guilty,' detained until they each paid twelve and half dollars for the fees of prosecution. In another apartment were several detained for trial, whose cases were postponed from the last assizes *at the request of the prosecutor to the Attorney-General.* As the assizes were held only twice a year, this was equivalent to an infliction of six months' imprisonment without trial on possibly innocent men.

These and other important facts were brought under the notice of the Governor. On shortly after visiting the Assembly, our Friends had the pleasure of listening to a long and able speech from the Solicitor-General, in which, by a coincidence too marked to be accidental, he touched upon the principal topics that had been dwelt upon in their letter to Sir E. M'Gregor, and dexterously held out hopes of a more frequent gaol-delivery and various other much-needed reforms.

This visit to Barbados occurred at a critical juncture.

Advantage had been taken of the arrival of a new Governor to revive the cherished project of a general apprenticeship of young free children. So vital a question did not fail to engage the earnest attention of Joseph Sturge and his colleague. They found that the design was seriously entertained and met with support in high quarters. The danger was imminent that an Act with the needful powers would be speedily passed by the island Legislature, and they had no confidence that such a measure would not be sanctioned by the Colonial Office. They felt it their duty to seek interviews on the subject with the Governor and the Solicitor-General, as well as with some non-official persons of position and influence. As the question was an exciting one, more of collision ensued with the views and feelings of others than was agreeable to the visitors; and though it was far from their wish to be taken as 'representative men,' yet they had afterwards reason to believe that they had unintentionally given the impression to the patrons of this scheme, that to persevere in it would bring the colony into conflict with the whole anti-slavery feeling of the mother country.

After their return home they had the satisfaction of learning that the measure had been silently dropped, and the project of planting a new germ of involuntary servitude in the island of Barbados finally abandoned.

At the commencement of this mission Joseph Sturge had perceived the importance of not occupying himself with special grievances or seeking local redress for wrongs, whether individual or general. His purpose was to ascertain the working of the apprenticeship system on the broadest scale, and to report his observations to the people of England, who had so deep an

interest in the result. In Barbados, in the emergency above explained, he was led to depart from his general policy. With his views and feelings he could not have done otherwise. Yet the result fully verified the wisdom of the course of proceeding he had first laid down, and convinced him that if he would accomplish, within the needful time, the great object of his journey, he must often be 'as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs.'

On January 13, 1837, they embarked in the 'Echo' steamer for Jamaica. This vessel had come out to ply as a mailboat between the islands, but was at present engaged in conveying Commander (now Sir Edward) Belcher, R.N., to the port of Chagres on the isthmus of Panama, whence he was to proceed to take the command of a surveying squadron in the Pacific. After a tranquil and prosperous voyage they reached Jamaica on the 22nd inst.

It has been already mentioned that, immediately on the visitors landing in Jamaica, their lost packet of letters of introduction was unexpectedly restored. They had, however, little need to make use of these credentials. Joseph Sturge was endowed with a presence singularly expressive of his benevolent and large-hearted nature, and perhaps in no man were the apparent opposites of gentleness and firmness ever more harmoniously blended. Wherever he presented himself he was received with respect and often with cordiality; although the object of his visit was known to everybody, and although he constantly reiterated his resolve to withhold the expression of his judgment upon what he saw and heard until his return to England.

His investigations in Jamaica were pursued with the greatest diligence, prudence, and success. He obtained

access to persons of all grades in society. At Spanish Town, the seat of Government, the Governor, Sir Lionel Smith, the Attorney-General, many of the special magistrates, and especially Richard Hill, Esq., secretary for the Stipendary Magistrates' department, J. M. Phillippo, the eminent Baptist missionary and many planters, professional men, and others, courteously responded to his call for assistance in his enquiries. But more important than all were the opportunities that occurred of conferring with great numbers of the negro apprentices themselves in many parts of the island, and of taking down their depositions from their own lips. This evidence Joseph Sturge and his fellow-labourer tested in a variety of ways, so as not only to assure themselves of its truth, but to enable them in case of need to produce it in full confidence that it could not be shaken.

It will be obvious that the results of three months of strenuous labour, the report of which occupies the larger half of an octavo volume, cannot be adequately presented here. A slight and general sketch must suffice. After spending a short time at Kingston and Spanish Town, and visiting various plantations and the courts of stipendiary magistrates in the vicinity of these important towns, Joseph Sturge purchased a conveyance and horses and proceeded with his companion on a tour, extending over the larger part of this magnificent island. Their route from Spanish Town, along the romantic banks of the Rio Colne, conducted them to their first halting place at Jericho, the house and station of John Clarke, Baptist missionary, in the inland parish of St. Thomas in the Vale. Here their investigations commenced in the *vivâ voce* examination of the people. Their estimable host had laboured long and

successfully in this island—he afterwards led the way as a missionary pioneer in Fernando Po and the adjacent parts of West Africa, and now he has again returned to spend the evening of his days in Jamaica—single in the great object of his dedicated life to impart the saving knowledge of Christ to the oppressed children of Ham.

Leaving Jericho, they wound their difficult way, by a long ascent significantly termed Mount Diabolo, into the parish of St. Ann, resting a night at the Moneague tavern. Next day, after laying a planter of the neighbourhood under contribution for information, they proceeded to St. Ann's Bay, where they were again the guests of a hospitable missionary, T. F. Abbott. Here they inspected the gaol and workhouse, rode to the place where the penal gang was at work, visited one important estate, and examined negroes from seven other plantations. They also called on the Wesleyan missionary, and on the rector of the parish, the eloquent historian of the island. The situation of this gentleman moved their Christian sympathies to the very depths. Some weeks before, while boating on the bay, three lovely grown-up daughters had been drowned in his own sight. The life and reason of the unhappy parent barely survived the shock. Until this time his chief earthly comforter had been the dissenting missionary, but he had never quitted the small room where he had retired immediately after the accident, and where, having collected his children's little treasures, he lay surrounded by all that could remind him of his loss. The unexpected visit of Joseph Sturge had a happy effect. The prostrate man was raised from his couch and induced to return to society. A few months afterwards he quitted the island and became a volun-

tary exile in the Far West, and afterwards a wanderer in the East. Many years afterwards the intercourse thus begun was renewed in this country at a time when each seemed to have reached the tranquil evening of an eventful life.

Leaving St. Ann's Bay, the travellers pursued their way to Brown's Town, in the interior of this parish, and the residence of another Baptist missionary, John Clark, a young man already surrounded with flourishing schools and congregation, and who has steadfastly laboured ever since in the same locality, with the blessing from on high visibly resting on his 'patient continuance in well-doing.' From the more intelligent members of his church most important details, often of graphic and thrilling interest, were obtained of the practical working of the apprenticeship.

Leaving Brown's Town, they proceeded across this most beautiful mountain parish (St. Ann's) into Trelawney, visiting *en route* the 'Retreat Pen,' a cattle farm belonging to S. M. Barrett, Esq., formerly M. P. for Richmond. This magnificent property was under the management of Samuels, a black man, formerly a slave, and was in the highest state of cultivation and order. The hospital, school, and the prosperous condition of the people on the estate were all highly satisfactory. Samuels, himself, was a noble specimen of humanity; a worthy Christian and a first-rate administrator. He attributed his success largely to the influence of Christianity. Before the missionaries came among them, there used to be frequent broils—now all was order and peace. A large proportion of the people were Wesleyans and Baptists. A few years ago none were married; at this time there were only two unmarried mothers of families on the property.

In the important parishes of Trelawney and St. James they spent some days at Falmouth and Montego Bay, the scenes of the labours and sufferings of the heroic missionaries, Burchell and Knibb, both of whom were still living, and still undergoing almost incredible toils in this tropical clime, for the benefit, temporal and spiritual, of the negro population. Here they pursued the usual investigations, visited the schools, prisons, and numerous important estates. A few of these were examples of liberal and humane management.

While in this neighbourhood they made the acquaintance of John Vine, of the London Missionary Society, who had lately resided on Arcadia, an estate belonging to W. A. Hankey, Esq. The circumstances relative to this property narrated in 'The West Indies in 1837,' caused that gentleman to publish a pamphlet in which he complained heavily of misrepresentation. The rejoinder by Sturge and Harvey, published separately and also in the Appendix to the second edition of their work, not only established their first allegations, but brought to view new and serious counts of indictment against the management of this property. This pamphlet was never replied to, and that it produced some effect on the convictions of the proprietor of Arcadia may be inferred from the fact that he gave his negroes their entire freedom shortly afterwards. This was the only serious attempt that was made to impugn the accuracy of the statements made in Sturge and Harvey's volume.

From Montego Bay they proceeded to Lucea in the parish of Hanover, near the north-western extremity of the island, where they were hospitably received by John Stainsby, the rector. This good man, on account of his evangelical piety and his sympathy with the oppressed, had in times past endured much obloquy and persecution.

Here they paid a visit, as usual, to the workhouse. Crossing the western end of the island from north to south, they rested a short time at Savanna le Mar, visiting the workhouse and other places that were of interest in reference to their mission. They proceeded thence to Hopton, in St. Elizabeth's parish, the estate and residence of Hutchinson Scott, Esq., whose name recalls two of the judges of Charles the First, one or both of whom are numbered among his ancestry. This pious and benevolent planter and his lady had introduced every ameliorating provision of the Abolition Act long before 1834; night-work during crop had been done away, and not only the comfort and health, but the moral and religious welfare of the people anxiously promoted. In his evidence before a committee of the House of Assembly in 1833, H. Scott, Esq. declared 'nothing is wanting to make the cane what a beneficent Creator designed it to be—one of His chosen gifts to man—but the regulations of an enlightened government, with some salutary check on the cupidity of the cultivator.'

After a *détour* by Joseph Sturge alone to Black River to inspect the gaol and workhouse, the travellers proceeded through the parish of St. Elizabeth, calling at Comfort, a central station of the Mico educational charity, to Mandeville, in the parish of Manchester. Here for the first and only time they were refused admission to view the workhouse. They proceeded on their way to Porus and Four Paths, stations of the London Society, where the missionaries Slatyer and Barrett were respectively labouring with zeal and success. They returned to Spanish Town on March 20. On the 5th of the following month Joseph Sturge embarked for England.

Dr. Lloyd, who arrived near the same time from Demerara, subsequently joined T. Harvey in a similar visit to the east end of the island, occupied chiefly by the rich and beautiful parish of St. Thomas in the East.

'The results of the Apprenticeship in Jamaica,' is the title of the seventeenth chapter of 'The West Indies in 1837,' which presents a clear and condensed summary of the evidence collected by Joseph Sturge and his fellow-labourers. The case scarcely admits of being put more briefly; yet the importance of the subject requires some illustration here.

The proportion of proprietors of important estates *resident* in the island was very small. The large properties were nearly all controlled by agents holding powers of attorney, and hence called 'planting attorneys.' These formed a small but highly influential class, living in the chief towns, and many of them occupying seats on the bench and in the legislature. Under them and residing on the estates were overseers and book-keepers. This class of men had been accustomed to exercise despotic power over the negroes, with very few and feeble checks. Marriage was all but unknown among them, and indeed would in nearly all cases have entailed immediate dismissal from employment. The men thus exposed to influences in the last degree debasing and corrupting, far removed from the sweet charities of domestic life and the restraining power of a healthy public opinion, were they who were expected to perform the delicate task of adjusting the routine of plantation discipline to the new order of things. With some generous exceptions, the only feature of the apprenticeship they could appreciate was its power of coercion. The planting interest on the spot was thus represented

by men who smarted under the loss of power and authority, but very few of whom had any stake in the property of the island.

The special stipendiary magistrates, by whom the law was administered, were of very various character and qualifications. They were inadequately paid, and in the absence of inns were necessarily dependent on the planters for hospitality on their official visits to the estates. Some were truly noble-minded men, who struggled heroically with the immense difficulties of their position; others were of average capacity, of good intentions but of little strength of purpose, while many succumbed readily to the influences that beset them, and became willing instruments of the old slave-holding spirit.

The mode by which the slave-population was subsisted had much effect in shaping the new forms that the old oppression assumed. In Antigua and Barbados the negroes were fed either by imported supplies, or with yams and other provisions grown upon the estates as part of the routine of cultivation; but in Jamaica, except two or three pounds of salt-fish per week, the negro raised his own food on mountain lands belonging to the estate, the time allowed for this purpose being fixed by the abolition law at four and a half hours per week in addition to Saturday.*

That the coercive powers of the new law were freely

* The mode by which they raised their own support, in the opinion of our travellers, imparted to the negroes of Jamaica a force of character and self-reliance which distinguished them from the population of some other colonies. The same circumstance has since exercised a powerful influence on the fortunes of the colony. To grow their own provisions is a sort of second nature with the labourer in Jamaica, whether employed in town or country. The possession of land is an object of intense desire; and hence the immense number of small freeholds that have been created since emancipation.

and even wantonly put in force is evident from this short statement:—

'During the first two years, 60,000 apprentices were punished (by the special magistrates in Jamaica) to an extent, in the aggregate, of a quarter of a million of lashes, and 50,000 other punishments, by the tread-mill, chain-gang, solitary confinement, and mulcts of time.' *

The workhouse discipline of the island was of the most cruel character. The treadmills were sheer instruments of torture. The visit to the 'workhouse' at St. Ann's Bay may be taken as an example:—

'The tread-mill at this workhouse is a cylinder, about eight feet in diameter, with broad steps. The hand-rail above it has eight pairs of straps, by which the prisoners are secured by the wrists. Every step is stained with blood, both recent and old. It had been shed so profusely, that even the sand on the floor was thickly besprinkled. We asked the deputy whether the prisoners on the tread-wheel were flogged. He replied, that it was necessary to touch them up—*women* as well as men. . . . The whip, which we asked to see, is a cat composed of nine lashes of knotted small cords. The driver of the penal gang, superintendent of the tread-mill, and other similar functionaries in this as well as in the other workhouses, *are taken out of the gang of life convicts.*'

At six A.M. next day they went to see the treadmill in operation:—

'Two mixed gangs of men and women were put upon it during our stay; the latter had no suitable dress, and were, therefore, liable to be indecently exposed. The lever by which the speed of the wheel is regulated was held the whole time by the driver, who sometimes relaxed his hold for a few seconds, which made it revolve with such rapidity as to throw all the prisoners off. Thus the punishment can be increased

* *West Indies in* 1837, p. 338.

beyond endurance at his caprice. One of the prisoners told us he was sent because a *cattle* (a steer) died under his charge. We observed this morning, that not only was the floor sprinkled and the steps stained, but the very drum of the mill was spotted with blood. If the prisoners cannot keep step, they are suffered to hang, battered by the wheel, till the time expires. The old woman mentioned to us yesterday hung the whole time, as she could not keep step from the commencement. She was so much injured that she could not be put on the mill this morning; but that did not prevent her being sent to work in the penal-gang in chains and an iron collar. . . . We rode to the place where the penal-gang was at work, and saw this old woman. She was a small weakly creature. Her legs were most severely bruised and lacerated. We subsequently learned, from negroes on the same estate, that the late special magistrate had permitted her to *sit down* (discontinue labour) on account of her age, and that, when he was removed, she was set to mind sheep. One of them died, and she ran away two months through fear of punishment. This was her offence. Several other women also showed us the injuries they had sustained on the tread-mill. Two of them had infants in arms, and had been sent, as the driver expressed it, 'for not being able to please their overseer.' One old man was a pitiable object, both his body and limbs being swelled by dropsy to a great size. He had been apprehended as a runaway. The strong men in the gang were employed in digging materials for the road out of a deep gully, which the women and weakly men brought up by a steep path in baskets on their heads; and this poor negro, being too weak to carry a basket, was chained to two others, with whom he was compelled to climb up and down the difficult ascent.'*

While in the street conversing with several persons, they saw the special magistrate of the district pass in his gig, in a state of intoxication, driven off in triumph by the book-keeper of a neighbouring estate to

* *West Indies in* 1837, pp. 187-191.

administer the Act for the Abolition of Slavery. Such was one of the men by whom this horrid workhouse at St. Ann's Bay was filled with victims. Far heavier, however, than the punishments inflicted by the magistrates were the sufferings that flowed from the capricious tyranny of the overseers, and for which there was no remedy :—

'The provision-grounds of the apprentices are from one to fifteen miles distant from their huts; but in no case is any allowance of time made for going and returning. The watchmen have in numerous instances been taken away, and the provision-grounds consequently ruined by the trespass of cattle or by plunder. In some cases they have suffered to such an extent from these causes as to be compelled to throw up their grounds, and to depend for subsistence on the most casual and insufficient resources. On many estates the negroes have been deprived of their field-cooks, and thus obliged to labour through the day without food. . . . During illness the apprentices are supported by themselves or their relatives; and their young families and aged relations are also dependent on them for support. Their poultry and other live-stock are frequently wantonly destroyed by the overseers; and the small portion of time which is allowed them for procuring the necessaries of life is diminished, not only by the frauds practised on them by the planters, but by the mulcts of the special magistrates. . . . Many of them are suffering from the presence of actual want. . . . Every birth increases the difficulty to the negro mother of providing maintenance for offspring and of escaping punishment herself. . . . . The treatment of pregnant women and nursing mothers is a feature of the apprenticeship by which it is unfavourably distinguished from the worst aspect of slavery. The indulgences which their situation required were, under the former system, imperfectly secured to them by the sordid interests of the proprietors. . . . All these indulgences have been curtailed, and in many instances

abolished, to the very extent of the capacity of the human frame for the endurance of suffering.'*

For further details we must refer to the volume itself from which our quotations are made.

The negro apprenticeship was an attempt to administer a system of slavery for a limited term of years by law; that is, to regulate, by the interference of Government, all the complicated details of the employment, subsistence, lodging, clothing, and medical care of the whole mass of the labouring population—men, women, and children—the strong men and the weak, the hale and the sickly, the docile and the stubborn. To perform this task with a just regard to the rights solemnly conferred on the negroes by the Imperial Parliament and ratified by the payment of twenty millions sterling to the planters, would have been simply impossible. The attempt was never earnestly made either by the local or Imperial Government. One special magistrate, Dr. Palmer, was dismissed, after the report of a commission of inquiry into his official conduct, which summed up his offences in the comprehensive phrase that he had 'administered the abolition law in the spirit of the English Abolition Act.' Joseph Sturge arrived at the conclusion that there had been a great violation of a solemn compact with the British people; that the bulk of the population still groaned under some of the worst evils of slavery; and that it was his duty to seek redress at the hands of parliament and by an appeal to the British public. As a time of preparation for freedom the apprenticeship was a conspicuous failure. The oppression of the labouring population, if not actually increased, was rendered more galling and

* *West Indies in* 1837, c. 17.

irritating by contrast with the hopes and promises with which the change was ushered in. The alienation of feeling between the two great classes of employers and labourers was increased; and hence, at its close, *emancipation* took place under far less favourable auspices than if it had been proclaimed on the 1st of August, 1834.

CHAPTER VIII.

ABOLITION OF THE APPRENTICESHIP.

Mr. Sturge's Determination to overthrow the Apprenticeship—Combination of Influences opposed to him—Public Breakfast to him at Birmingham—His Speech on that Occasion—Visits other large Towns—The Anti-Slavery Committee refuses to move—Provisional Committee formed at Birmingham—Conference at Exeter Hall—Central Negro Emancipation Committee—Its Operations—The Country roused—Lord Brougham's Speech and Resolutions in the House of Lords—Appeal to the House of Commons—Meeting of Delegates in London—Sir George Strickland's Motion for the Abolition of Apprenticeship—Excitement in the House—The Debate—O'Connell's Speech—Motion defeated, but the Division a virtual Victory—Joseph Sturge goes to Work again—Another Meeting at Birmingham—Notice of another Motion by Sir J. Eardley Wilmot—Another Call of Delegates—The Motion is carried—Excitement in the Galleries—Letter of Mr. Buxton—The Government refuse to yield, and persuade the House to revoke its Decision—But the Colonial Legislatures act on the First Decision, and pass Acts of Emancipation—Joy of the Missionaries—Letters of Phillippo and Knibb—The British Government then accepts Emancipation—Act of Emancipation—Mr. Edward Baines' Description of it—Lord Brougham's Testimony as to who had done the Work—Celebration of the Day of Freedom at Birmingham—Public Meeting—Letters of Mr. O'Connell and Rev. J. A. James—Speech of Dr. Lushington—Letter of Mr. Buxton—Anecdote of Lord Brougham—Mr. Sturge's Speech at the Meeting—Celebration of the 1st of August in the West Indies—Good Behaviour of the Coloured People—Testimony of Mr. Phillippo—And of Sir Lionel Smith.

When Mr. Sturge returned from the West Indies, he formed the fixed determination never to rest until he had effected the overthrow of the apprenticeship system, the flagrant and manifold evils of which he was now in

a condition to prove by ample evidence. This was, no doubt, a most arduous undertaking, which none but a man of resolute purpose, sustained by a deep consciousness of right, and an earnest conviction of religious duty, could have confronted. The obstacles that stood in the way of success were numerous and formidable. The Government was firmly opposed to any disturbance of the existing arrangement. All the leaders of parties in parliament turned coldly away from him. Many of the old friends of the Anti-slavery cause held aloof from the movement, as in their judgment imprudent and impracticable. The public mind, also, somewhat exhausted by the long and strenuous exertion which had been put forth prior to the passing of the Emancipation Act, had subsided into comparative apathy, and few things are more difficult than to rekindle the embers of an extinct agitation. Undaunted, however, by all these discouragements, Mr. Sturge resolved to make his appeal to the moral and religious feeling of the country. Birmingham, as it was the first to bid him God speed on his departure, so was also the first to greet him with cordial welcome on his return. Soon after his arrival in England, he was invited by his fellow-townsmen to a public breakfast in the town-hall, where he first unfolded his tale of oppression and suffering. The statement which he made at that meeting produced a great impression. It was afterwards published in a pamphlet, and circulated widely through the country, as was also the narrative of a negro apprentice, of the name of James Williams, whom he had redeemed from dreadful misery in Jamaica by purchasing his freedom, and had brought with him to England. He visited various other large towns, everywhere addressing crowded audiences, and by his per-

fectly simple and artless description of the scenes of hardship and cruelty he had witnessed himself, or learnt from the testimony of others whose evidence he could rely on, awakening strong indignation in the hearts of those who heard him. He appeared, also, before a committee of the House of Commons, by whom he was examined for seven days, and to whom he related, only in a form more circumstantial and minute, the same sad and truthful story. In order, however, to bring public opinion to bear on the legislature, it was necessary to adopt some mode of concerted action. The first and most obvious plan of doing this, was, of course, by applying to the old Anti-slavery committee in London to take the matter in hand, and use the organisation and influence at their disposal for rallying once more the scattered forces, which they had previously led to victory. This overture, however, was received with no favour. The torpor and timidity of age were gradually creeping over some of the excellent persons, who had hitherto taken the lead. The enterprise seemed to them rash and hopeless, and so they declined the responsibility of moving in it. But Mr. Sturge, though deeply grieved by this defection of old friends in his moment of need, was too much in earnest to be turned from his purpose, even by their disapproval. A provisional committee, therefore, was formed at Birmingham, which took the initiative in summoning a body of delegates to meet in London. A circular was accordingly issued, and responded to by 140 gentlemen, who assembled at Exeter Hall on the 14th of November, 1837, and sat in conference there for ten days. This body appointed a 'Central Negro Emancipation Committee,' which sent forth its agents and appeals throughout the country, to

tell the people of England how flagrantly they had been defrauded; how the Abolition Act, imperfect as it was in itself, was openly, systematically, and generally violated in the colonies; how the condition of apprenticeship was not only a perpetuation of slavery, in some respects, even in a more aggravated form than before, but was pregnant with disastrous possibilities on the future destinies of the negro; and how there was no remedy but the absolute, unconditional, and immediate abolition of the whole system of human bondage, under whatever form or name it existed.

The signal once given, the agitation spread with great rapidity throughout the country. The provincial societies were re-organised with a large infusion of fresh blood, public meetings were held in all the principal towns of the empire, some of the old voices rang out once more in eloquent tones over the land, while many younger men, who came then into the field for the first time, threw all the impulse of unworn energy and zeal into the conflict. In this case, too, the natural feelings of pity for the sufferings of the oppressed, and of resentment against the cruelties of the oppressor, were swollen by an indignant sense of the fraud that had been practised upon the nation. The people had submitted without a murmur to the sacrifice of twenty millions of money for the redemption of the slave, and they now found, after the money had been paid, that the slave was still the helpless victim of the planter's cupidity and caprice, groaning in as bitter a bondage as ever, and in the utmost danger, by the cunning application of vagrancy laws and police acts passed by the colonial legislatures, of having his chains riveted for an indefinite period even after the professed expiration of the term of apprenticeship. Everywhere the per-

sonal testimony of Mr. Sturge and his colleagues, whose veracity and disinterestedness were beyond impeachment, told with immense effect upon the public mind.

The first attempt to give effect by Parliamentary action to the sentiment thus created in the country, was made by Lord Brougham in the House of Lords. Like most of those who had been parties to the measure of 1832, his lordship was, at first, extremely averse to any proposal tending to disturb that settlement. But when at length he was induced to examine the budget of evidence brought by Mr. Sturge and Mr. Scoble from the West Indies, as to the operation of the Apprenticeship Act, his indifference was changed into the liveliest indignation, and on February 20, 1838, he delivered one of the most masterly and eloquent speeches that ever fell even from his lips. The speech he concluded by moving a series of resolutions of which one was to the effect, 'That it is expedient that the period of predial apprenticeship in all the colonies should cease and determine on August 1, 1838.' But when the division was taken only seven peers were found to vote for the resolution.

The only hope that now remained was in making an appeal to the representatives of the people, over whom, of course, the public opinion that was so rife out of doors, might be expected to exercise much greater sway than it could on our hereditary legislators. That this appeal might be rendered as effectual as possible, there was another call of delegates on the eve of the day when the question was to be submitted to the House of Commons. On March 27, three hundred and sixty-four gentlemen met at Exeter Hall to reiterate their determination never to rest satisfied until every form and vestige of slavery was swept from the face of the British

dominions. On the 29th, Sir George Strickland proposed, and Mr. Joseph Pease seconded the resolution that had been agreed upon by the abolitionists, to the effect that the apprenticeship should cease on August 1, 1838. There was great excitement in the House. For days and weeks previously, petitions, having altogether upwards of a million signatures, had been pouring in, in a full stream, from all parts of the kingdom. Honourable members had been deluged with private letters from their constituents. The gentlemen from the country who had come to attend the conference at Exeter Hall, had spent a large portion of the previous two days in calling upon their representatives, to enforce by personal importunity the request so often before conveyed to them by petition and correspondence. All this had secured a very large attendance of members. The lobbies were crowded with the delegates, who waited to thrust a roll of petitions into the hands of their friends, or to whisper a last word of entreaty or warning into the ear of the lukewarm and vacillating. Great use was made of these facts, on both sides, in the course of the debate. The ministerial speakers bitterly complained of the influence that had been brought to bear upon members of the House, though it is difficult to conceive, if representation be anything more than a name, what right they had to complain of influence exercised in so legitimate a form and in so hallowed a cause. The supporters of the motion, on the other hand, turned to good account, as well they might, a spectacle so honourable to the character of our country, as that of hundreds of persons coming up at their own cost from all corners of the kingdom, not to press any demand in which their own interests, political or commercial, were involved, but moved solely by a sense of justice and

humanity, to plead the cause of the poor and of those that were ready to perish.

'You have heard,' exclaimed Mr. O'Connell at the close of an admirable speech in which he had exhausted the whole question, 'You have heard within the House the noise occasioned by the congregated Dissenters who besiege your doors. And who are they that have raised this cry of immediate emancipation? Are they idle and violent agitators, who delight in the convulsions of the State and disregard social order; men who look to the chances of revolution as holding out the hope of their being possibly useful to their interests? No! They are the steadiest, soberest, most industrious, and most respectable men, differing from me in their religious forms, but holding out in their conduct the happy spectacle of religious zeal united with religious charity. They are men who do not care for distance of country or difference of clime, but risk their health as scattered missionaries of humanity, and have travelled at their own expense to the remotest corners of the globe, in order to indulge the noble gratification of doing the work of their God by benefiting his creatures.'

The whole weight of the government was thrown into the scale against the motion, and after two night's debate it was defeated by a majority of 54 in a house of 484. But the wonder is, not that it was defeated, but that its promoters succeeded in commanding 215 votes on the division. For in truth it was a very singular contest, such an one as is seldom seen in Parliament. It was wholly removed from party interests or sympathies. All the leaders of the great parties, as we have already observed, were against the abolitionists. Not a single man of the high official class, from either side of the House, and, indeed, hardly any man who ever bore a conspicuous part in the debates, except Mr. O'Connell and Dr. Lushington, spoke or

voted in their favour. It was a struggle between the moral and religious sentiment of the country, and the obstinacy of a routine officialism, which rallied round it all placemen, past, present, and to come. We need not wonder that, under the circumstances, the friends of immediate emancipation felt that virtually they had achieved a great moral triumph. Instead, therefore, of being disheartened, they prepared to renew the conflict.

Inspired by the unflagging faith and courage of Joseph Sturge, the campaign, as usual, was opened at Birmingham. On April 19, a town meeting, called by the high bailiff, was held at the Town Hall, and petitions for the immediate abolition of the apprenticeship were again adopted, and this example was followed throughout the whole district. As the same motion could not be brought before Parliament a second time during the same session, the difficulty was evaded by altering its terms. Instead, therefore, of asking, that the apprenticeship should terminate on August 1, it was resolved to propose that 'negro apprenticeship in the British colonies should *immediately* cease and determine.' Notice of motion to this effect was given by Sir Eardley Wilmot for May 22. Once more the summons was sent forth to the friends of the slave, and once more, being the third time within six months, the delegates repaired in large numbers to London. But the House itself had grown more indifferent to the subject, and the attendance, therefore, on the appointed day, was comparatively thin, arising, partly, perhaps, from the suspicion that the abolitionists were hardly in earnest in their declared intention to bring the matter forward, or at least to push it to a division a second time. But whoever counted on this did not know the men. Sir Eardley Wilmot moved his resolution, which was seconded

by Mr. C. P. Villiers, and although the ministers put up Lord Stanley, the most accomplished orator in their ranks and the author of the Apprenticeship Act, to oppose the motion, they were defeated by a majority of three. The galleries, as usual on such occasions, were crowded with Quakers and other abolitionists, among whom was Thomas Fowell Buxton (not then himself a member of the House), drawn there by his intense interest in the subject, even though he questioned the expediency of the movement, and had refused to join in it. But when the result became known, he had a heart too generous and too true to the cause of the slave not to exult in the success which he had previously deemed impossible. Writing to a friend, describing the scene that ensued, when the division was declared, he says, with that pleasant touch of humour which gives such a charm to some of his letters :—

'Athenæum, May 23, 1838.

'I must write a line to tell you that Sturge and that party, whom we thought all in the wrong, are proved to be all in the right. A resolution for the immediate abolition of the apprenticeship was carried by a majority of three last night. The intelligence was received with such a shout by the Quakers (myself among the number), that we strangers were all turned out for rioting! I am right pleased.'

The Government, however, still refused to yield. It was written in the book of fate, whence it must be transferred to the page of history, that the final and real abolition of slavery should receive no help, but every hindrance, from the Whig ministry. Within a week of the day when Sir Eardley Wilmot's resolution was carried, they persuaded the House of Commons into a vote, virtually rescinding its previous decision. But it mattered

not. The sentence of death had been pronounced upon slavery by the voice of the British nation, and the ungracious intervention of those in power on its behalf did not avail to prolong its execrable existence. The West India colonies had been no unmindful observers of the remarkable scenes transacting in England, and after so unequivocal an expression of the public feeling, which they knew well, from the character of the men at the head of the movement, would be only repeated the next session with a still louder emphasis, they became aware that they could no longer keep hold of their prey. The colonial legislators alarmed at the agitation in England, and with the avowed wish, if possible, to prevent its further progress, determined themselves to confer liberty on their bondsmen. Barbados, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Kitts, Nevis, Montserrat, the Virgin Islands, and, at last, Jamaica, passed Acts, declaring the apprenticeship at an end, and the slaves free on August 1, 1838, the very day proposed by the British abolitionists. The letters that now poured in upon Joseph Sturge from the missionaries in the West Indies show how full of joy, almost to bursting, their hearts were at seeing their poor flocks on the eve of being rescued from the hands of the oppressor. Well acquainted with the state of opinion in the colonies, they never seemed to have had a misgiving as to the issue when they saw the flame that had been kindled in England by Mr. Sturge and his colleagues on their return. Writing to Mr. Thomas Harvey on July 7, 1838, he gives a hasty summary of some of the communications he had just received from these good men.

'As Edmund is going to send a letter, I have concluded to forward thee a parcel with some of the cheering news received this morning from Jamaica. Phillippo writes on the back

of his letter, up to the 10th of last month, "The Act has passed without a dissentient voice; on the 1st of August next Jamaica will be free." In his letter he says; "Last evening, when the result of the bill could not be mistaken, I held a meeting for thanksgiving to Almighty God for the joyous event. The hearts of the people seemed filled with gratitude to overflowing. On the 1st of August I expect we shall have a day of sacred joy unparalleled in the history of the world." Knibb writes after he had heard of the division on Sir George Strickland's motion: "Your defeat is a victory, and so the ministry will find it. The mighty moral force you have put forth cannot be resisted, nor can I doubt that the triumph is yours. The ministry might have had the glory, but it now belongs to the omnipotence of public opinion." In another letter he says: "My heart is too full to write in any connected manner; I breathe a freer air; my spirit bounds with gratitude; I see in this act tyranny abashed and confounded before truth, and I hear (sweet music!) the expiring groans of oppression throughout the world. Your kindness will excuse the haste of this. I could not help writing, my heart was so full. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name." I have letters also by the last two packets from Burchell, Baines, Tinson, Lyon, and Anderson. I cannot spare these letters at present, as I want to refer to one or two of them at a missionary meeting to-morrow.'

When the West Indians had thus, at last, been obliged to accept emancipation as inevitable, there was no course open or possible to the British Government but to acquiesce in and ratify the decisions of the colonial legislatures, and an act was accordingly passed, which, as Mr. Edward Baines, sen., then member for Leeds, said, 'though certainly not looking to acts of parliament for eloquence, contained a passage which appeared to him one of the most eloquent he knew of, either in history or legislation.' Here it is:—'That from the

first day of August 1838, all and every the persons hitherto held in slavery within any British colony shall be to all intents and purposes free and discharged of and from all manner of slavery, and shall be absolutely and for ever manumitted; and that the children to be born of such persons, and the offspring of such children, shall in like manner be free from their birth, and that from and after the first of August, slavery shall and is hereby utterly and for ever abolished throughout the British colonies, plantations, and possessions.' Lord Brougham, in a speech delivered in the House of Lords on the 16th of July, just after the tidings that Jamaica, the last to adopt such a measure, had passed an Emancipation Act, thus referred to the agency, by which this great triumph of freedom had been achieved:—

'He gave honour to those men who had been the objects of calumny which they regarded not, of suspicions which they despised, of vituperation which they allowed to pass by them as the empty air; he gave to such men as Joseph Sturge, John Scoble, Josiah Conder, and George Thompson, with whom he had been united as a most humble but most zealous coadjutor, the glory of that day, being as thoroughly persuaded as he was of his own existence, that, but for their efforts, that day would not have dawned upon them.'

When the first of August arrived, there was a great commemorative festival held at Birmingham. In the morning, a large number of the children of the day and Sunday schools were assembled and entertained at the Town Hall, after which they marched in procession to a piece of ground in Legge Street, where, in the presence of an immense assemblage of persons, Joseph Sturge laid the foundation for new schools, to be called 'The Negro Emancipation Schools.' In the evening there was a public meeting at the Town Hall, with

Sir Eardley Wilmot in the chair. The large room was filled to its utmost capacity, the platform being occupied by Mr. O'Connell, Dr. Lushington, Mr. Edward Baines, Mr. Charles Lushington, Mr. Benjamin Hawes, and a large number of the friends of the cause from various parts of the kingdom. Mr. O'Connell, in accepting the invitation to this meeting, wrote the following cordial and characteristic letter to Mr. Sturge:—

'London, July 7, 1838.

'My dear Friend,—I will be, at a word, with you. Make one of your professed objects *to consider the propriety of forming a society to aid in the universal abolition of slavery.* If you do *that*, come what will, I am with you at Birmingham on the 1st of August. I could not promise unless I had an object of that importance in view. I do not adhere to any form of words. Use what terms you think most expedient, so that you show an intention *to take into consideration* slavery in other nations. Specify America if you choose, or leave the name out of your plan. But frame your announcement in such a way as to enable us to begin the work with the vile and sanguinary slaveholders of Republican America. I want to be *directly* at them. No more side-wind attacks; firing directly at the hull, as the seamen say, is my plan.

'What ineffable delight it must afford you, my esteemed friend, to reflect that *your* exertions have created a flame before which the chains of two years' slavery of half a million, at the lowest calculation, of your fellow-men have melted away. But for *your* exertions the two years more of apprenticeship would certainly be inflicted, and every hour of these two years would become more and more aggravated in cruelty. If you had remained at home, it is perfectly clear—clear beyond any doubt—that these two years would have continued without remission. This is, indeed a proud thought for you, and in spite of any shrinking from praise,

all good men on earth will thank, and may our gracious God reward, you with eternal happiness, is my fervent prayer.

'Begin a new and still more extensive career. Let us not delay or defer. This is a Christian work; let us begin with Christian zeal. Our voices will go over the Atlantic and cheer the worthy abolitionists in America, while the sound will tend to confound the sanguinary men who dare to call their fellow-beings their property, and doom man to hopeless servitude—to total ignorance and to all the disgusting vices which are produced by oppression upon ignorance.

'Raise the white flag of *universal freedom*, and you will have me heart and hand at your side. We will move Britain and all Europe against the vile union of republicanism and slavery; and I hope soon to see the day when not a single American will be received in civilised society unless he belong to an anti-slavery union or body.

'I have the honour to be,

'My esteemed friend,

'Yours most faithfully,

'DANIEL O'CONNELL.'

The Rev. John Angell James, who had so long acted with Mr. Sturge in this cause, and cheered him on amid many difficulties by his sympathies and prayers, was now one of the foremost to rejoice in his friend's joy, and to congratulate him on the great work which Providence had honoured him to be the instrument of accomplishing. Being unable to attend the meeting, he wrote to him the following letter:—

'Woodside, July 30.

'MY DEAR FRIEND,—I cannot resist the inclination I feel to address to you a few words of sincere and hearty congratulation on the glorious and, to myself, unexpected results of your noble and heroic struggles on behalf of the oppressed slaves. To you, under God, this blessed emancipation is to be traced. *You* were the chosen instrument of Providence

to awaken our sympathies, excite our energies, and elicit our efforts. I say not this in the way of flattery, but of grateful and holy acknowledgement. I would not be the means of striking out one spark of pride, of cherishing one emotion of undue self-complacency, as I believe you are too sensible of your dependence on Divine grace, and too conscious that all you have done has been accomplished by His help to allow what I say to do you harm. May your life be long spared to witness the growing happiness of a race for whom you have done and suffered in various ways so much.

'I deeply regret that I shall not be able to be with you on Wednesday next. Sorry am I to be absent from my post when an opportunity thus presents itself for honouring our town by honouring you, and at the same time of expressing our united joy over an event, which, whether we view it in reference to the negroes themselves, or in reference to the cause of slavery generally, is one of the most interesting and important of modern times.

'I shall be with you in spirit, and a distant partaker of your joy. May a feeling of thankfulness to God pervade all hearts, and all be disposed to go from one conquest of humanity to other battles against slavery as it exists, and the slave-trade as it is carried on, in other parts of the world.

'Your sincere and grateful friend,

'J. A. James.'

It is a striking illustration of that 'shrinking from praise,' to which Mr. O'Connell refers, that in the resolutions presented to the meeting at Birmingham there was no mention made of Mr. Sturge, or any allusion whatever to his services. The omission was, no doubt, by his own earnest request.

But it was impossible, of course, to prevent the speakers from alluding, frequently in terms of high respect and admiration, to the disinterested zeal and unshaken courage by which he, a simple citizen of Birmingham, had contributed in so marked a degree

to the liberation from bondage of 800,000 human beings:—

'My principal motive,' said Dr. Lushington, and a more earnest, devoted, and unflinching friend of the slave was not to be found in the kingdom, 'in coming here was to pay my humble testimony to the undaunted courage, the determined resolution, the powerful and unshaken principles of my honoured and excellent friend Joseph Sturge, which not merely led him to encounter the difficulties of a long voyage, and to forego the comforts of his own home, by going to the West Indies, but to do much more in persevering, unmoved and unshaken, against the cold feeling of the House of Commons, in urging his suit when his representations fell without effect on the unwilling ear of the British legislature; and at last, by dint of constant energy, having brought about that consummation which God had granted, and which they had now met to celebrate.'

But we may be sure that few things, amid all the gratifying incidents and associations of that day afforded sincerer pleasure to Mr. Sturge, than to receive the following generous and cordial letter from Sir T. F. Buxton:—

'London, July 30, 1838.

'My dear Sturge,—All other feelings are absorbed in the sincere and deep satisfaction arising from the knowledge that in thirty-two hours from this time those chains that have been so weighty upon me for fifteen years, as upon the bodies of those who have borne them, are so soon to be broken. I bless God, that he who has always raised up agents such as the crisis required, sent you to the West Indies. I bless God, that during the apprenticeship not one act of violence against the person of a white man has, I believe, been perpetrated by a negro; and I cannot but express my grateful exultation that those whom the colonial law so recently reckoned "as brute beasts," the fee simple absolute whereof resided in their owners, will so soon after the expiration of another day

be clothed with the full rights of man, and stand on a level with those who once would have thought it an insult to humanity, and almost an impiety to God, if any one had presumed to suppose that their "chattels" and themselves were equals.

'Let none of us forget that those who are emancipated will be assailed with many an attempt to curb and crush their liberty; nor that they want the compensation of the means of education—nor that two millions of human "chattels" in the East Indies require our protection—nor that the slave-trade (of all evils the monster-evil) still defiles and darkens one quarter of the globe. May that same public voice, which has now been so happily exerted, and under the influence of that same gracious Lord who has wrought its present victory, never be hushed while a taint of slavery remains!

'Your sincere and grateful friend,

'T. F. Buxton.'

To which testimonies of Dr. Lushington and Sir T. F. Buxton, we may be permitted to add that of Lord Brougham. Mr. Cobden, in a letter to the biographer, says:—

'I remember a very graphic description which Lord Brougham gave me in a conversation at his house in Grafton Street of Joseph Sturge's conduct in the matter of the apprenticeship system, which he adduced as an illustration of our friend's indomitable energy. He told me of Mr. Sturge coming to him to arraign the conduct of the masters in the West Indies for oppressing their apprentices; how he (Brougham) laughed at him, deriding him in this fashion for proposing to abolish the apprenticeship: "Why, Joseph Sturge, how can you be such an old woman as to dream that you can revive the anti-slavery agitation to put an end to the apprenticeship:" how the quiet Quaker met him with this reply: "Lord Brougham, if when Lord Chancellor thou hadst a ward in chancery who was apprenticed, and his

master was violating the terms of indenture, what would'st thou do?" how he felt this as a home thrust, and replied, "Why, I should require good proof of the fact, Joseph Sturge, before I did anything:" how, our friend rejoined, "Then I must supply thee with the proof:" how he packed his portmanteau and quietly embarked for the West Indies, made a tour of the islands, collected the necessary evidence of the oppression that was being practised on the negro apprentices by their masters the planters: how he returned to England and commenced an agitation throughout the country to abolish the apprenticeship, to accomplish which it was necessary to re-organise all the old Anti-slavery Societies which had been dissolved, or had laid down their arms, happy to be relieved from their long and arduous labours: how he brought them again into the field and attained his object. This was the narrative of Lord Brougham, and well do I remember the very words in which in conclusion he awarded the whole merit to our friend. "*Joseph Sturge*," said he, "*won the game off his own bat.*"'

It was characteristic of the sober, practical character of Mr. Sturge's mind, as well as the untiring ardour of his zeal, that in the speech he delivered at the commemorative meeting in Birmingham, instead of indulging, as most of the speakers very naturally did, in glowing, triumphant congratulations on the success already secured, his attention was directed almost exclusively to the work which yet remained to be done. After devoutly acknowledging that 'there was indeed enough in the present position of their great cause to call upon them to unite in a heart-felt expression of gratitude to the All-wise Disposer of events,' he adverted in a single sentence to the fact that 'through the mighty moral influence of the people of England, the sun had that day risen for the first time upon the freedom of a large majority of their sable brethren in

the British islands of the West.' And then, evidently fearful lest the friends of freedom should be lulled into security by their own success, and so be inclined to rest upon their laurels, he turns at once to spread out before them the vast expanse of land that had yet to be conquered for liberty :—

'It was not,' he said, 'chiefly for the purpose of addressing them in the language of congratulation that they had been invited to meet together on that occasion. Ready as was their chairman to sacrifice his political and personal feelings in this great cause, it was not for that alone they would have asked him to leave the bed of a sick son, whose illness was a source of intense anxiety, to preside at the present meeting; nor was it for this they invited the distinguished strangers who had favoured them with their company, to put themselves to so much inconvenience; but they asked their presence among them that evening, in order, if possible, to assist *in bringing what had been gained in aid of what yet remained to be accomplished;* and he wished to impress upon them, in the strongest manner, that though they had cause to thank God and take courage, they were only on the threshold of their labours.'

He then went on to remind them that even in the West Indies their work was far from complete :—

'They must not for a moment forget that they had not yet heard liberty was proclaimed to the negroes in any of the crown, nor yet in some of the chartered, colonies. . . . But what was much more important, they had to see that the infant liberties of their colonies were not crushed in the bud, and they had abundant evidence to show that nothing but the untiring vigilance of this country would prevent this.'

He then adverted to the slavery existing in some parts of our Indian Empire, and to the millions of the enslaved to be still found in the United States, in

Brazil, in Cuba and Porto Rico, and in the French, Danish, Dutch, and Portuguese colonies. He also dwelt upon the frightful extent to which, notwithstanding all the exertions of this country for more than thirty years, the slave-trade still prevailed, and repeated the profound conviction which he had so often expressed before, that there was no possible means of destroying the slave-trade but by destroying slavery.

It was in the spirit of these remarks that he certainly, for one, turned away, from that moment, from the contemplation of the victory in which he had borne so large a share, to gird himself afresh for a conflict which he knew would be painful and prolonged, and which in truth in his case ended only with life.

But while the friends of the slave were thus commemorating the day of his deliverance in England, how did the 1st of August pass in the West Indies? It passed in rapturous, exulting gladness, but also in the most absolute peaceableness. The people crowded the chapels on the evening of the 31st July, and remained there engaged in exercises of devotion until within a few minutes of twelve o'clock, when they all sank into profound silence waiting with breathless expectation the stroke of the hour which was to proclaim that the day of freedom had dawned, and then burst into a loud and long-continued shout of triumphant joy. 'Never,' says Mr. Knibb, 'never did I hear such a sound. The winds of freedom appeared to have been let loose. The very building shook at the strange yet sacred joy.' The following day was of course devoted to holiday festivities. On the morning all the places of worship were again thronged, while the faithful missionaries, who had laboured and suffered so much during the dark days of slavery, led the devout thanksgivings of their

emancipated flocks, and addressed to them earnest words of mixed congratulation and counsel. Afterwards there were processions, and banquets, and floating banners, and triumphal arches, and all other forms and symbols of gratitude and gladness, to which the newly-born freed men abandoned themselves with all the exuberant emotion of the simple, impulsive negro nature. There were enthusiastic and endless cheers for their friends, for those whom they knew had bravely fought their battles through years of labour and obloquy. The names of Clarkson, and Wilberforce, and Buxton, and Brougham, and Sturge oft awoke the echoes of the islands, and floated in loud acclaim far over the waves of the Caribbean sea, a tribute which, we believe, none of them would have exchanged for the loftiest strains of triumph that ever hailed the 'conquering hero' as he marched on his path of blood and glory. But not one act of riot or disorder disturbed the harmony of the scene. No law was broken. No social decorum was violated. No white person was insulted by word or gesture. 'Thus the period,' says the Rev. Mr. Phillippo, speaking of Jamaica, 'from which the worst consequences were apprehended passed away in peace, in harmony, and in safety. Not a *single instance* of violence or insubordination, of serious disagreement or of intemperance, so far as could be ascertained, occurred in any part of the island.' What contributed greatly to this result in that island, which was deemed the great focus of danger, was the manner in which the Governor, Sir Lionel Smith, thoroughly identified himself with the feelings of the people. He joined in their processions, shared their festivities, spoke to them kind words of encouragement and advice, and thus lent the sanction of his character and office to their

joyful celebration of freedom. For this, and for the uniform firmness with which he protected the rights of the negro, he was rewarded by the enthusiastic gratitude of the people, by the perfect peace and order which marked the whole period of his government, and by the cordial detestation of the planters.

Nor did this good conduct of the enfranchised slaves pass away with the occasion. When the commemoration of their freedom was over they went back steadily to work:—

'There was no interruption,' says Mr. Phillippo, 'on the part of the labourers, to the ordinary cultivation or business. Commended for their past behaviour, encouraged and urged by ministers of all denominations to continue to exemplify their fitness for the boon they had received, as well as to facilitate the progress of emancipation in America, in the islands that surrounded them, and throughout the world, by a continuation of industrial habits for reasonable wages, the greater part appeared on the different properties on the Monday of the following week.'

A year after this, Sir Lionel Smith, to whom Mr. Sturge had transmitted a copy of a memorial presented by the Birmingham Anti-slavery Society to the Colonial Minister deprecating his removal from the Government of Jamaica, wrote of the coloured labourers in the following terms:—

'No country in the world can show a better peasantry, and they have proved themselves deserving of the generosity of the nation and of the exertions of their friends. Having been in authority here when the great blessing of freedom was conferred on the much injured negroes, I have remained among them to the prejudice of all my private interests, hoping that, in a few months more, I should have been the

* Phillippo's *Jamaica*, p. 185.

happy instrument of seeing their liberty consolidated by just and wholesome laws. I revere the constitution of my country, but I could easily show that in the present state of Jamaica society we have not the materials for a real constitutional government, and constituted as the popular branch of the legislature now is, *no governor* will be permitted to do justice to the negro population. My recall, therefore, is of no consequence.'

We are aware that in thus commemorating the services of one man, there is some danger of doing apparent injustice to others whose labours and sacrifices also largely contributed to the accomplishment of the good work. It is hardly necessary to say that there were scores and hundreds of men, some in Parliament, and many out of Parliament, who bore a most honourable part in this final triumph of the cause of freedom, without whose cordial co-operation, Joseph Sturge would never have attained the consummation he so devoutly wished. If we abstain from mentioning names here, it is simply because it would be invidious, seeing the list would be necessarily incomplete. But we believe that of all the multitudes of brave men and women that rallied around him on his return from the West Indies, and so firmly stood by his side through the long conflict that ensued, not one would have hesitated to acknowledge, that he was really the animating spirit of the movement, that but for his faith, and courage, and perseverance, that 1st of August, 1838, would not have dawned as a day of jubilee upon 800,000 oppressed and degraded human beings.

We cannot better conclude this chapter than by the following beautiful lines from the pen of Miss Whittier, the sister of the distinguished American poet, a lady who seems to share in no small degree her brother's

poetical genius. They were written after Mr. Sturge's visit to America in 1841, but they refer more especially to his work in the West Indies. Mr. Whittier in sending them to his friend says:—

'Below I copy for thy sister some verses by *my* sister; they were not intended for thy eye, but I have taken the liberty of sending them at the risk of Elizabeth's displeasure':—

'Fair islands of the sunny sea! midst all rejoicing things
No more the wailing of the slave a wild discordance brings;
On the lifted brows of freemen the tropic breezes blow,
The mildew of the bondman's toil the land no more shall know.

'How swells from those green islands, where leaf and bird and flower
Are praising in their own sweet way the dawn of freedom's hour,
The holier resurrection-song from hearts rejoicing poured—
Praise for the gift of freedom—man's regal crown restored.

'How beautiful through all the green and tranquil summer land,
Uplifted as by miracle, the solemn churches stand!
The grass is hidden from the paths where waiting freemen throng,
Athirst and fainting for the cup of life denied so long.

'Oh! blessed were the feet of him whose generous errand here
Was to bind up the broken heart, and dry the falling tear;
To lift again the fallen ones, a brother's robber hand
Had left in pain and wretchedness by the waysides of the land.

'The islands of the sea rejoice—the harvest-anthems rise—
The sower of the seed must own 'tis marvellous in his eyes;
An early labourer in the field with morning strength unshorn,
The burden of the weary noon how well his faith has borne!

'Thanksgiving for the holy fruit!—Should not the labourer rest,
His earnest faith and works of love have been so richly blest?
The pride of all fair England shall these ocean-islands be,
Whose peasantry with joyful hearts keep ceaseless jubilee.

'Rest?—Never! While his countrymen have trampled hearts to bleed,
The stifled murmur of their wrongs his listening ear shall heed;
Where England's far dependencies her might—not mercy—know,
To all the crushed and suffering there his pitying love shall flow.

'The friend of freedom everywhere, how mourns he for *our* land,
The brand of whose hypocrisy burns on her guilty hand,—
Republicans, yet scorning the democracy of Right
While planting upon servile necks the tyrant foot of might!

'For as, with steady faith of heart and strength for ever new,
The champion of the island slave the conflict doth renew,
His labour here hath been to point the Pharisaic eye
Away from hollow word and form to where the wounded lie.

'How beautiful to us should seem the coming feet of such—
Their garments of self-sacrifice have healing in their touch;
Their gospel mission none may doubt, for they heed the Master's call,
Who, here, walked with the multitude, and sat at meat with all.'

CHAPTER IX.

CARE FOR THE EMANCIPATED NEGROES.

Acknowledgment by Mr. Sturge of others' Services—Dr. Palmer —Driven from his Office as Stipendiary Magistrate—Subscription raised for him in England—Mr. Charles Harvey—His Defence of the Negroes—These Gentlemen publicly entertained at Birmingham—The Marquis of Sligo—Becomes a Convert to Abolitionism —His liberal Conduct as Governor of Jamaica—A Testimonial from the Negroes to him—Mr. Sturge's continued Interest in the Coloured Population—Attempts made in the West Indies to coerce and defraud them—Police and Vagrancy Laws—Mr. Sturge's Intervention—Persecution of Missionaries—Subscriptions raised for them—'The West India Land Investment Company'— The Occasion and the Object of starting it—Successful Prosecution of the Scheme—But frustrated by a legal Difficulty—Mr. Sturge's personal Efforts to supply the Want—Education of the Negroes— 'The Jamaica Education Society'—Importance of accustoming the Negroes to help themselves.

Before proceeding to narrate the various measures which Mr. Sturge endeavoured to promote with a view to complete and consolidate the work so auspiciously commenced, we must pause for a moment to advert to the part he took in acknowledging the services of others who had laboured or suffered in the same cause. Most of the stipendiary magistrates appointed by the British Government to administer the law after the passing of the Emancipation Act of 1833, though they were sent out presumably as the official guardians of the negro, soon yielded to the temptation of trying to accommodate themselves as much as possible to the prejudices and interests of the planters, on whose good-will their own

comfort so largely depended. There were, however, some noble exceptions to this rule. Among these was Dr. Palmer, a stipendiary magistrate in Jamaica, who resolutely set himself to oppose the frauds and cruelties practised on the unfortunate slaves, and 'to administer the abolition law in the spirit of the Abolition Act.' For this he became the victim of incessant persecution by the dominant class, and was at last driven from his office. He came to England to expose the abuses of the apprenticeship system, and to seek redress of his own personal wrongs from the Colonial Office. He succeeded in the former, for his testimony was of great value to the abolitionists, but he failed in the latter, for the authorities at home treated him as a troublesome and impracticable man, who did not know how to keep official secrets. The friends of the cause of freedom, however, in England, by the exertions of Mr. Sturge and others raised a subscription of upwards of 1000*l.*, which they presented to Dr. Palmer as an expression of their respect and gratitude for his integrity and courage. Associated with him was another gentleman, Mr. Charles Harvey, a solicitor in Spanish Town, who had ventured to give his professional services, to defend the negroes against some very wanton aggressions made upon their rights by the planters. He also became involved in the same odium, and was, by means of some legal chicanery, prosecuted and fined for presuming to interfere between the master and his slave. These two gentlemen were invited down to Birmingham, and were entertained at a public breakfast at the Town Hall on the day after the commemorative festival already described.

Another pleasant duty devolved upon Mr. Sturge about this time. The Marquis of Sligo was governor of

Jamaica at the time when the Emancipation Act was passed. He was himself a West India proprietor, and, like most of his class, he was in favour of the system of colonial slavery until he became a member of the committee of the House of Lords, appointed in 1832 to receive evidence as to the condition of the slaves in our colonies. He came out of that enquiry with his views completely changed. 'I then became a convert,' such are his own words, 'from the very evidence adduced by the West India interest itself. I entered that room a colonial advocate. I left it a decided abolitionist.' Still, when he went out to Jamaica he believed that many of the representations of the anti-slavery party in this country were greatly exaggerated. But when from his official position he became more intimately acquainted with the working of the system, he 'discovered that the horrors of slavery were much greater than he had previously conceived, and found by personal experience that the reports he had heard of them in England, fell short, very short, of the sad reality.' When, therefore, he became aware of the oppressions to which the negroes were subjected, he endeavoured, with great firmness and magnanimity, to protect them in the enjoyment of their rights. This, of course, rendered him very unpopular with the planters. But he felt less difficulty from that cause than from the apathy or concealed hostility of the colonial office, which subsequently led to his resignation of the Government, in 1836. His just and humane conduct, had, however, made a deep impression on the hearts of the coloured population, and on his retirement they appointed a committee to receive their contributions for the purpose of expressing their feelings by some form of testimonial to his lordship. The money thus raised, amounting to

1000 dollars, was placed in the hands of Mr. Sturge, during his visit to Jamaica, with a request that he would, in conjunction with Mr. T. F. Buxton, Dr. Lushington, Sir George Stephen, and other friends of the negroes in England, arrange the best mode of presenting this testimonial of the gratitude of the apprentices for the protection afforded them during his lordship's administration, and the loss they had sustained by his removal from the Government. Before the wishes of the negroes could be carried into effect, the marquis added largely to those claims on their gratitude by declaring in his place in Parliament that, whatever might be its decision on the question of the apprenticeship, it was his determination to liberate the apprentices on his own estate on August 1, 1838, a declaration which greatly promoted the efforts then making for the abolition of the system. This induced the apprentices to raise additional funds, in order to render their testimonial more worthy of his lordship's acceptance. Ultimately a piece of plate, consisting of a magnificent candelabrum in the form of the Arica Palm (the West India tree of liberty), was presented to his lordship in March, 1839, by a deputation of the leading members of the anti-slavery party, among whom were Mr. Buxton, Dr. Lushington, Rev. John Dyer, Rev. John Burnet, Sir George Stephen, and Mr. Joseph Sturge, &c.

Mr. Sturge's interest in the coloured population of the West Indies, whom he had so largely helped to emancipate, did not cease on their attainment of liberty. To the end of his life he regard them still as his clients, whose rights he was bound to protect, and whose well-being it was his pleasure to promote by every means in his power. Nor, indeed, was it safe for the friends of the slave in this country to relax their vigilance for an

instant, even after the work of emancipation had been legally completed by the abolition of the apprenticeship. Unhappily, acts of parliament cannot exorcise the *spirit* of oppression from the hearts of those who have been long accustomed to the exercise of irresponsible power over their fellow-men. Although the West India planters reluctantly yielded the last remnant of slavery when they found the moral pressure in England was too great to be resisted, they did so in no graceful or magnanimous spirit. On the contrary, true to that law of our evil nature, which makes the oppressor hate his victim all the more for having escaped from his grasp, they used every means in their power to mar the boon of freedom conferred by the mother-country. The first indication of this was given by the passing of sundry statutes by the local legislatures of several of the West India islands on the subjects of police and vagrancy which, under colour of salutary fiscal restraints, did, in fact, amount to a modified perpetuation of slavery. When this became known, the Birmingham Anti-Slavery Society immediately addressed the Colonial Office on the subject, reminding the authorities there of the language used in the circular despatch of Lord Glenelg to the colonies, that 'the apprenticeship of the emancipated slaves should be immediately succeeded by personal freedom, in that full unlimited sense of the term in which it is used in reference to the other subjects of the British crown.' This remonstrance, followed by many of a similar nature from other Anti-slavery bodies, was attended with the desired effect. For shortly after there issued from the Colonial Office three orders in Council on the subject of marriage, vagrancy, and police, which proved that the Home Government

honestly designed to secure to the newly-enfranchised population the full benefit of the boon they had legally obtained.

But while thus balked in their attempt to entangle the liberated slave once more in the meshes of bondage by cunning colonial legislation, there were other means open to the planters of expressing their dislike to freedom, which they used with unsparing vindictiveness. There can be little doubt, as already intimated, that the perfect peace and order with which the transition from slavery to freedom was effected was owing, in a main degree, to the influence which the Christian missionaries had acquired and exercised over the minds of the people. But though the planters were thus indirectly indebted to these men for the safety of their lives and property, yet their hatred to them as the friends and protectors of the slave was so intense, that they lost no opportunity of harassing them by every means of annoyance in their power. In a country where the class from whom alone jurors were selected were all, more or less, implicated in that evil system which the missionaries were pledged to oppose, legal indictments became a safe and terrible instrument of oppression in the hands of their enemies. Accordingly, soon after the abolition of the apprenticeship, tidings reached England that, in Jamaica, various actions, principally for alleged libels, had been brought against the friends of the negro, in which the juries of course decided against the parties accused, and subjected them to enormous penalties. Among the victims of this system of legal persecution were Mr. Stainsby, a clergyman of the Church of England, and Mr. Oughton, a Baptist missionary, who were charged with libellous communications, on the ground of certain expressions

employed by them in private conversation, deploring the evil conduct which they witnessed around them. On the other hand, when Mr. Knibb, the eminent Baptist missionary, sought redress by an action against one of the colonial newspapers for the publication of a libel, which consisted of a tissue of the most monstrous and malignant falsehoods, the grand jury at once threw out the bill. Mr. Sturge refers to these facts in a letter to Mr. John Cropper, under date of August 8, 1839:—

'I have a long letter from Stuart by the packet arrived this week. He finds things in so unfavourable a state in Jamaica, that he talks of staying there two or three months. The last account shows the planter party to be quite uppermost there. Stainsby has been fined 2,500*l.*! Lyon 250*l*, and the editor of the "Falmouth Post" had a verdict against him, but judgment had not been pronounced. Knibb, also, had lost a trial, on an action for libel. I apprehend much of this has arisen from the removal of Sir Lionel Smith. We shall have, I fear, much to do there.'

He had no mind, however, to abandon those distant strugglers for the right, to be ruined by the malice of their enemies. Writing to the same correspondent two months later, he says:—

'We met in London last week to consider the best means of raising funds to protect our persecuted Anti-slavery friends in Jamaica, and the annexed was agreed upon as a circular, and the names put down as the provisional committee, provided the latter will allow their names to stand. I engaged to ask if thou had any objection to have thy name among them. The committee meet at 27 New Broad Street, London, on 7th day next, the 5th inst., when they are very anxious to have a few names as subscribers to publish along with the address and list of committee. We want to bring out the list with 8 or 10 of 50*l.* each, if we can. G. W. Alexander and I intend to give that sum.'

Ultimately, a sum of more than 1,000*l.* was raised for the help of those sufferers for righteousness' sake.

There was another measure for the benefit of the coloured population of the West Indies, which about this period occupied, to a large extent, the time and attention of Mr. Sturge. Its object was to place within the reach of the liberated slaves the means of obtaining an independent settlement on the land, by the purchase of small freeholds, and the establishment of free villages. Some provisions of this nature became absolutely necessary, by the course which the planters thought fit to pursue towards their labourers after their emancipation. Instead of allowing the price of labour to adjust itself, according to the natural law of supply and demand, they entered into a combination to keep wages down, by drawing up an arbitrary scale at very low rates, which they mutually pledged themselves never to exceed. Unfortunately for them, there was a test of their own creation, by comparison with which it was easy to discover how grossly below the just value of labour were the prices they had fixed. Under the apprenticeship system, slaves were at liberty to purchase of their masters the remainder of their time. Some of them did so, or attempted to do. When complaints were made of the high rate of demand made by the planters for these unexpired years of the negroes' captivity, their reply was that the value of the services of the apprentice must be regulated by the value of labour in the market. And what was the value of this labour, as estimated by themselves, when they had *to sell* it? It seems to have varied from 2*s.* 4*d.* to 3*s.* 4*d.* currency, for the day's wages. But when they had *to buy* it of the recently made freedmen, the sum which they fixed for the day's wages was 10*d.*

currency, with the use of the cottages and grounds then in the labourers' occupation, which together would not, at the highest valuation, amount to more than 1*s.* 8*d.* Grossly unjust as was this attempt to 'oppress the hireling in his wages,' the planters had, or imagined they had, the means to compel the negroes to accept their own terms. The cottages and lands occupied by the coloured labourers, which, after the advent of freedom, they would of course have to hire, were on the planter's estates. The plan, therefore, was, if they refused to work at the proffered wages, to eject them from their tenements or to exact such ruinous rents as they would be utterly unable to pay. Preparations had been already made for carrying into effect this cruel system of coercion, for the attorneys, on some of the estates at least, had taken care to serve notices to quit on the negroes before the arrival of the day of emancipation, so as to be in instant readiness for the application of the screw. Ever since his visit to the West Indies, Mr. Sturge had been in active correspondence with the missionaries, who were the natural and only protectors of the people against the masters' oppression. He was early apprised, by these vigilant guardians of the poor, of this scheme in contemplation for defrauding the liberated slave of the just reward of his labour. And he determined, if possible, to defeat it. To this end, he promoted the formation of a company, to be called the 'West India Land Investment Company,' for the purchase of real property in the West Indies, to be afterwards sold or let in small lots to the negroes.

In February, 1839, he writes to Rev. John Clark:—

'I will mention to thee, confidentially, that some of us are trying to get up a little plan for the purchase of land, for the

establishment of free and independent negro villages, and if thou canst look out, without appearing to do so, for good spots for this purpose where land can be purchased on favourable terms, I shall be obliged to thee.'

A few months later, he writes again on the same subject to Mr. Clark, who, in his generous anxiety to protect the negroes, had himself bought some land for their use, and thus brought himself into some temporary embarrassment. He appears to have suggested that the projected company might assist him by a loan. To which Mr. Sturge replies:—

'Our land company is fairly afloat, but we have made no purchases. . . . . I cannot give thee any prospect of loans from the company, but they may probably take some of thy lots off thy hand. I write in great haste, and sooner than thou shouldst be put to any great inconvenience in thy benevolent efforts, thou mayst draw upon me for 500*l.* sterling at 90 days, on loan for 6 months.'

In the prospectus of the Land Company, which was issued in September 1839, it is stated that the projectors of the company were confident their plan offered, commercially, sure and safe grounds for investment. 'At the same time,' proceeds this document, 'it must be borne in mind that the primary object of the promoters of this scheme, is to transfer the control of West India property gradually from those who have systematically opposed the advancement of the negroes in civilisation, knowledge, and Christianity, to such men as would really promote their moral and religious welfare, and also to afford places of refuge to those of the West India peasantry, who may be still harassed by various forms of oppression. The projectors are, therefore, anxious that the shares should fall into the

hands of such individuals, as would assist the attainment of the above objects.' This proposal was generously responded to by the wealthier members of the Anti-slavery party throughout the country. In a very short time, more than half of the required capital of 100,000*l.* had been subscribed, and other shares were being taken up rapidly, when a legal difficulty intervened. The company required the protection of a charter, or letters-patent, not only for the sake of limited liability, but, also, as furnishing the only practical security against injuries, which strangers might commit upon their property, and for enforcing contracts entered into in the colonies. The Government, however, refused to grant them this concession. An influential deputation of the gentlemen concerned in the undertaking waited upon Mr. Labouchere, who was then President of the Board of Trade, to explain its nature and objects. But though he fully recognised the benevolent motives of the projectors, and the probable advantage that would accrue to the liberated slaves from such an arrangement as that they proposed, yet, owing to the old prejudices then in greater force than now, against accumulation of land in mortmain, their application was ultimately disallowed, and the whole scheme, after great labour and cost, fell to the ground. There remained, therefore, for Mr. Sturge, only to do his utmost personally for the object he hoped to have accomplished by means of this association. He accordingly advanced considerable sums, on loan, to the different missionaries, to enable them to purchase land, on which the negroes might settle and build cottages, without being at the mercy of the planters. This was attended with the happiest effects. The independence of the people being thus secured, they

were in a position to treat with their employers as free labourers, on the question of wages, nor did they show any indisposition to work, when they could obtain such remuneration as supplied an adequate motive for working; while the prospect of investing their savings in small freeholds of their own was, of course, a strong stimulus to both industry and thrift. The following letter, from the Rev. John Clark to Mr. Sturge, refers to these matters:—

'Brown's Town, Jamaica: March 18, 1841.

'My dear Friend,—Your kind letter by Mr. Knibb was duly received. Most sincerely do I thank you for willingness to oblige and assist me, by allowing the 250*l.* (which ought long since to have been repaid) to lie over a few months longer, and also for your affectionate and faithful advice relative to the purchase of lands. The long and severe drought of last year greatly distressed the people, and rendered it impossible for many to pay the balances due on the land I bought for them, or I doubt not I should by this time have been able to repay you. . . . I fear I have trespassed too much on your kindness, and should have been distressed at not yet being able to pay you, but for your letter and the kind message sent by Mr. Knibb.

'Although I involved myself in difficulties in procuring land for the people, I cannot regret it when I contrast the state of the people in this neighbourhood with that of those in other parts of the island where land could not be procured. We have here very few instances of tyrannical conduct on the part of the planters; if any occur the people have the remedy in their own hands. There is quite enough labour in the market. I hear no complaints against the people; they are labouring steadily and diligently. Many are rising in respectability, some cultivating their own freeholds, and others managing small properties for others. The desire for religious knowledge has not diminished. Our schools are well attended. At this, and Sturge-town stations, we have 1,500 children and

adults in the Sabbath-schools, and in the day-schools (including a branch school at Buxton), upwards of 500 children. We have lately commenced a school for elder girls, who had not, when in slavery, opportunities of obtaining instruction. Some attend two, others three and four days in the week. Near the whole of the black population of this parish are connected with one or the other of the religious societies. A good work is going on in all the congregations, and if God continues to bless the labours of those engaged in His work, as in former years, the time cannot be far distant when ignorance and crime will disappear, and pure and undefiled religion prevail.'

While Mr. Sturge was thus struggling to secure from invasion the freedom obtained at so much cost, he was not unmindful of the importance of fitting the liberated slave for the enjoyment of freedom, by placing within his reach the means of a better education. When he was in Jamaica in 1837, the Baptist missionaries in that island addressed an urgent appeal to him and his companion, Mr. Harvey, on this subject. The establishment and maintenance of day-schools did not, at that time, form part of the agency for which they could look for any help from the funds of the Society that sent them out. They were, however, deeply impressed themselves, as they state in the document referred to, with 'the absolute necessity of making vigorous exertions for the Scriptural instruction of the rising generation of the poor.' They described in strong terms, the almost insuperable difficulties with which they had to contend in this department of their labours, arising from want of permanent funds; and they besought their visitors on their return to England, to 'represent their case to the advocates of popular education at home (but more especially to the Society of Friends), in the earnest hope that they will be induced to form a society

for the purpose of raising funds, to be placed in their hands as a local committee, to enable them to carry out their plans, in this particular, into immediate operation.' This charge was not forgotten. At the first Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends, after his return from the West Indies, Mr. Sturge, in giving some account of the journey of himself and Mr. Harvey, took occasion to urge the appeal of the missionaries for help in their educational labours, with great earnestness on his co-religionists. A few months later, he issued another appeal in the form of a circular, which led to the formation of the 'Jamaica Education Society.' By means of this association, considerable sums were raised for many years, principally by the Society of Friends, and transmitted to the Baptist missionaries for educational purposes. Mr. Sturge was himself an annual subscriber of 50*l.*, often augmented by special donations to a much larger amount. But while thus labouring cheerfully to help the coloured people, he was fully alive to the importance of cultivating among them habits of self-help. He frequently urged this upon the attention of the missionaries. Thus, writing to the Rev. John Clark, August 27, 1838, he says:—

'I rejoice to hear that thou hast refused the proffered Government grant, and trust that the abolition of the apprenticeship will enable the negroes to do so much for themselves, that, with a little help from England you will be able to get on well without any infringement of the voluntary principle; and I feel persuaded this will add greatly to the extent and success of your labours. I think I know of from 500*l.* to 600*l.* likely to come in in a few weeks from various quarters, that may be had for your school societies. Charles Harvey, who is in my house, cordially unites with me in the observation that it will be greatly to the benefit of the negroes to do as much as possible for themselves, and I think their means

of doing so will shortly exceed those of any European labourers. In the mean time, I hope we shall not in the least degree relax our efforts to procure subscriptions in aid from here.'

A few months later, in a letter to the same correspondent, he returns to the subject:—

'Thou wilt I know agree with me that it will tend to the moral elevation of the negroes to pay as much as they possibly can for everything, schools, chapels, &c. If they can get fair and equitable wages, and if they are industrious, they will be one of the most prosperous peasantry in the world. I do not mention this, my dear friend, at all with a wish to spare my own pocket or those of my English friends, so far as I have access to them, but as soon as the people can be made independent of others in pecuniary matters I am persuaded it will add to their happiness and promote their moral education, for it is in human nature to value most what we pay for ourselves.'

CHAPTER X.

THE FORMATION OF THE NEW ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY AND THE FIRST WORLD'S CONVENTION.

The old Anti-Slavery Society extinct — Joseph Sturge's early idea of a Comprehensive Association against Slavery — Letter on that subject to William Forster — The idea deferred, but now resumed — Meeting of Delegates to form the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society — Its fundamental Principle — Difficulty in carrying it — Letters of Mr. Sturge on that subject to Mr. John Cropper and Mr. Lewis Tappan — The New Society calls a 'World's Convention' — Mr. Sturge's comprehensive plan — His labours in connection with the Convention — Letters to G. W. Alexander— Convention meets at Freemason's Hall — The elements of which it was composed — Thomas Clarkson — Haydon's description of the opening scene.

We have already seen by the tenor of his remarks at the commemorative meeting at Birmingham, that Mr. Sturge's motto was, 'to bring what had been gained in aid of what yet remained to be accomplished.' When, therefore, the great labour and excitement through which he had to pass in connection with the apprenticeship question had somewhat subsided, he began, early in 1839, to take measures for the formation of a new Society, for the systematic prosecution of the work which, as he then described, still remained to do. The old Anti-slavery Society had been virtually, if not formally, dissolved; and there was no body then in existence to be the representative and organ of the Anti-slavery sentiment, which recent events had proved was still strong in the heart of the nation

It is clear, indeed, that the idea had long dwelt in the mind of Mr. Sturge of forming an association of a broader and more comprehensive character than any yet attempted, with a view to bring the intelligence and conscience of the civilised world to bear against the system of human bondage. So far back as 1833 he had broached this project to his friend, Mr. William Forster. In a letter to that gentleman, in May of the above year, he says:—

'MY DEAR FRIEND,—The little interchange of sentiment we had in London makes me desirous of endeavouring to impart to thee, rather more fully than I then did, what has a good deal occupied my own mind for some time past, namely, the consideration of what it might be the duty of our Society to do further in the great cause of abolition should we happily succeed in carrying a full and complete emancipation of our own slaves. I am aware that my views would appear to many so utopian that I should not, I believe, have ventured to mention them even to thee had I not found that thy own extended nearly as far, and that I know the All-wise Disposer of events often makes use of the weakest instrument to promote the accomplishment of some of His most important designs. The wonderful advance which this cause has made in our own country also justifies the belief that the cry of this poor oppressed people has indeed 'gone up to God,' and that He wills their deliverance from their cruel bondage, not only within the British dominions, but throughout the whole world. Some of my ideas, so far as they have assumed a tangible shape, are these: That a Society should be at once formed for the abolition of slavery throughout the world, and that endeavours should be made at the ensuing Yearly Meeting so far to throw the burden upon it as to get the appointment of a standing committee, to adopt the means of uniting with other sections of the Christian public in a general effort to promote this great object, at the time when the example of England is exciting the attention of the civilised world.

The effect of this example throughout the American continent will no doubt be great; but whether it effects the general emancipation of the slaves there peaceably, or through a dreadful servile war, will, under Providence, I think, greatly depend upon the proper discharge of the duty which the religious public in this country owes to those who are rightly concerned on the other side of the Atlantic, and their using every effort to induce the abolitionists there to advocate their cause on *sound and just principles*. . . . . Happily, our members in thi scountry now generally entertain correct views on this subject (and the importance of this can only be fully appreciated by those who have known the evils of the contrary); the public still, I believe, in a considerable degree, look to them as leaders in the cause, and perhaps they never were in a position for exerting their influence in it more beneficially, so that there is thrown upon them an additional responsibility to do their duty. Let us, therefore, form a general crusade against this accursed system throughout the civilised world.'

In this letter he mentions also some of the means which he proposed to employ to carry the object into effect. And it is sufficiently note-worthy that among them are missions to the West Indies and to America.

But whatever thoughts of this nature had engaged his attention at that early period, it no doubt soon became evident to him that their accomplishment must be postponed until the battle, which proved far more obstinate and prolonged than he then expected, should have been fought out in our own country. For how could we become propagandists of freedom until we had cleared ourselves of all share in the guilt of slavery? But now that we had finally wiped away that reproach his mind again reverted to his early Utopia of 'a general crusade against the accursed system.'

His first step was to call a preliminary and unofficial

conference of the friends of the slave, at which it was resolved to summon a meeting of delegates at Exeter Hall on April 17 and 18, 1839, to consider the necessity of some combined and organised effort for the promotion of the cause. This meeting accordingly took place at the appointed time, and issued in the establishment of 'The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society,' which is still in active operation. The fundamental principles of the Association were embodied in the following resolution :—

'That so long as slavery exists there is no reasonable prospect of the annihilation of the slave trade, and of extinguishing the sale and barter of human beings : That the extinction of slavery and the slave trade will be attained most effectually by the employment of those means which are of a moral, religious, and pacific character ; and that no measures be resorted to by this Society, in the prosecution of those objects, but such as are in entire accordance with these principles.'

As some of those present at the meeting were disposed to favour the attempt to put down the slave-trade by the employment of armed cruisers on the coast of Africa, there was considerable difficulty in bringing them to accede to the latter part of this resolution. But on that point Mr. Sturge was immovable. Besides his strong conviction that the attempt to put down the traffic by mere external coercion, while slavery itself existed and offered such abundant temptation to the cupidity of reckless and unprincipled men, would be entirely useless, and perhaps worse than useless, by aggravating the horrors without materially diminishing the extent of the trade ; his Christian conscience revolted from the idea of trying to promote philanthropic ends by violence and blood. In a letter to his friend

and relative, Mr. John Cropper of Liverpool, he thus adverts to the stand he had made on this question:

'London: Fourth month, 18, 1839.

'My dear Brother,—I thought you and William Bevan would like to have early information as to the result of our meeting, which was adjourned yesterday, but closed to-day. Dr. Lushington, Sir G. Strickland, &c., took a very active part, and, therefore, thou mayst suppose we had rather a hard struggle to maintain our peace principle. At one time during the discussion I distinctly stated that, unless it was laid down as a fundamental principle that the society would not sanction a resort to arms, I could not be a member of it. At length Dr. Lushington, who behaved in the most handsome manner, consented to, indeed, prepared a resolution which, I think, has quite secured our point, and which, at length, passed unanimously. Dr. Lushington and T. F. Buxton are members of the new committee. We mean to issue an extra "Emancipator" next week, to give our account of the proceedings, which, of course, you will receive.'

In a similar strain he writes from London to Mr. Thomas Harvey of Leeds on the 23rd of the same month:

'I am glad the discussion here allowed me a proper opportunity of avowing my belief, not only of the inconsistency of the means hitherto pursued with Christian principle, but of the increased suffering inflicted upon Africa by them.'

As a further illustration of the extreme importance which Mr Sturge attached to this point, and how sensitively he shrank from the idea of pressing the use of carnal weapons into the service of the Anti-slavery cause, we may cite a few extracts from letters he wrote about the same time, to his friend Mr. Lewis Tappan of New York, a man of kindred spirit, whose name occupies a foremost place on the roll of American philanthropy.

Under date of October 2, 1840, he writes;—

'I alluded in my last to the only point on which there is

likely to be any difficulty to obstruct an entire co-operation between your American and Foreign Anti-slavery Society and ours. I mean the full recognition of the peace principle. I have been talking this matter over with some influential members of my own (Quakers) society, who are also warm supporters of our Anti-slavery cause, and are very desirous of doing what they can to influence the orthodox Friends of America to join your new organisation, if they can do so without any compromise of principle. Our friends *here* are not very sanguine of getting them to join you generally, but have suggested that I should ask thee if thou thought your committee would be willing so far to meet their views as to adopt the practice fallen in with at our late Convention: of a pause of silence, instead of any formal prayer; and if further your Society would adopt the peace principle in accordance with the circular first issued by the committee to invite the attendance of delegates. This is a *sine quâ non* with "Friends," who are thought quite consistent on this side of the water, in urging it; and it is a point to which I individually attach very great importance, both as a matter of principle and as affecting the ultimate success of our efforts.'

In a subsequent letter to the same friend he says :—

'I rejoice to find thou and I so much unite on the peace principle, and with the views thou says thou thinks are held by some of your committee, I almost dread the consequence of your coming to any resolution upon it at present. But I hope thou wilt have sufficient influence to prevent their coming to any decision that would at all lower your standard in this respect, or get the decision postponed till we can have a free and full communication on the subject. When our friends, Birney, Stanton, return, I hope to be able to communicate more fully upon this *vital* point. It is becoming of more and more importance.'

In one of the passages just cited there is an allusion to a 'late convention.' This refers to the great Anti-slavery Convention held in London in June 1840. When

the British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society had been fully organised, Mr. Sturge became anxious that it should adopt some means of bringing the sacred cause committed to its charge before the attention of the world in all its relations and bearings. To this end it was determined to convoke what was called a 'world's convention.' Early in 1840 the committee of the new association issued an invitation to the friends of freedom and humanity in all countries of Christendom 'to a general conference in London,' as this document expresses it, 'in order to deliberate on the best means of promoting the interests of the slave; of obtaining his immediate and unconditional freedom, and by every pacific measure to hasten the utter extinction of the slave-trade. To this conference they earnestly invite the friends of the slave of every nation and of every clime.'

But it may be readily imagined that to ensure the success of such a project, much more was necessary than the issuing of circulars, however earnest and importunate. Nothing but the living fire of intense personal zeal and devotion could suffice to kindle in the hearts of others an interest strong enough to induce the exertions and sacrifices required for the occasion. And indeed, the activity of mind and body which Mr. Sturge put forth at this time in order to render the anticipated meeting effective, was truly marvellous. How bold and comprehensive were the plans he had formed, may be seen from the following memorandum which he drew up in June, 1839 :—

'It is suggested, that if it be practicable, visits be paid to the different countries in Europe, interested or implicated in the slave-trade and slavery, and also to the American continent and adjacent islands where slavery exists. To effect this, probably not less than three separate deputations

will be needful. One should visit Denmark, France, Spain, and Portugal; one the Brazils, and one go, *viâ* America, to Cuba, Porto Rico, Martinique, Gaudaloupe, and Santa Cruz. The objects of this visit should be to obtain accurate information, if possible, upon all points contained in the queries we may resolve to append to the foreign circular; to promote the formation of anti-slavery associations where they do not exist already, and especially to secure the appointment of suitable persons to attend the conference to be held in London next year. Those who undertake such a mission should do so at such time, as will enable them to return to England early in the fifth month next year.'

In sending this memorandum to his friend Mr. G. W. Alexander, Mr. Sturge writes, June 25, 1839:—

'I annex a sketch of what I think ought to be done if we would make the conference next year as successful as human exertion can, under the Divine blessing, help it to be. With regard to myself I am willing to take any part which on mature reflection it may be thought would most serve the cause; and to appropriate, if needful, 1000*l.* for the expense of a journey. I thought that William Forster and some other anti-slavery friends might go to the Continent, and if thou and thy wife, on fully considering it, should see it right for thee to go to the Brazils, and if it should appear best for me to go to America, Cuba, &c., we might so arrange it that we could meet in Jamaica, and after spending a few weeks there return, *viâ* New York, together to England. Were I to go to America, I should urge our friends there to send a deputation to explore the condition of slavery and the slave-trade in their own Southern States, while I went to Cuba and the other slave-holding islands. Thou wilt please to consider what I say about my willingness to go as quite confidential, as much harm sometimes arises from matters getting talked of, especially if they are not carried into execution.'

But as circumstances arose which rendered it impossible for Mr. Sturge to quit England at that time, he

laboured hard to find a substitute for the proposed journey to Cuba. In a letter to Mr. Lewis Tappan in September 1839, referring to a gentleman who had been mentioned as suitable for such a mission, he writes: —

'My proposition is this: that if thou and a few others of our most judicious anti-slavery friends, should, after an interview in strict confidence, think him a well-qualified person for the mission and he is willing to undertake it, get him to go privately to Cuba, and obtain all the information he possibly can as to the nature and extent of slavery there, the condition of the liberated Africans, &c. &c. If possible, we should also obtain the names and get into personal communication with such persons as are sound abolitionists, and who, if they dare not form themselves into an association on the spot, might devise some means by which we or you might correspond with them; and, if it is any way practicable, get one or more of this character to represent Cuba at our convention in London in 1840. Having completed his visit to Cuba, I would then suggest that he should go from there to Texas, and collect the names of the anti-slavery party he speaks of, and if possible, get one of them to join him as their representative to the convention. If this party in Texas, is sufficiently strong to avow publicly their willingness to make every man free who touches their soil, provided the abolitionists will join in a friendly negotiation to induce the Mexican Government and European States to recognise their independence, it would be a great point indeed gained. But if they were not prepared for this public avowal, it would be desirable for S. P. Andrews and any one who might accompany him to get to London in sufficient time next spring to advise us what other course to pursue. Should this plan be approved by you, I authorise thee to hold me responsible for an amount which you may consider a reasonable expense of his journey, economically conducted.

'Very sincerely thy affectionate friend,

'Joseph Sturge.'

Though it was found impracticable to carry into effect the whole of Mr. Sturge's comprehensive programme prior to the meeting of the convention, it was never relinquished, and ultimately all the countries mentioned by him were visited for anti-slavery purposes. But while these extensive operations abroad were kept in view, no time was lost in adopting such organisation at home as would secure that the United Kingdom, at least, should be well represented at the coming convention. Under date of July 7, 1839, Mr. Sturge writes again to Mr. Alexander, as follows :—

'MY DEAR FRIEND.—Since we parted I have been thinking much of our country organisation of new Anti-slavery Societies, and I believe it would be a very great inducement to our friends, in America and elsewhere, to come to the meeting next year, if they *knew* they should be met by a numerous body of their English friends. Therefore, if we could get a hundred places or upwards in the United Kingdom to pledge themselves in the first instance to send delegates to such a meeting, it would be a great point gained. I had written thus far when thine of yesterday came to hand, and, on considering its contents, it has not altered my opinion of the propriety of the decision we came to on Third-day to secure a certain amount of support in this country as soon as we can. This will mainly depend upon thee and me, and I venture to suggest, on the other side, our respective districts. The points which should be recognised in the formation of these societies are the recognition of our principles, objects, and means; the circulation of information, especially by our proposed new periodical; the aiding of our funds, and that each society should at once pledge itself to send one or more delegates to the Conference in 1840. I confess I am rather afraid of thy having —— with thee in the formation of the society at Brighton, he is so lax on our peace views. I am more and more of opinion that we gave way too much on the point at Exeter Hall, and that we must unequivocally avow our prin-

ciple at the formation of all our auxiliaries. My want of a knowledge of foreign languages is a great bar to my being of any use on a continental visit, and I do not like to lose thy home labours for the next two months. Try and persuade William Allen to go to Denmark and Sweden, if we can find him a companion. I fear William Forster will not go to France, but I am not without hopes that Captain Moorsom may. I spoke to him about it last night. I go to Gloucester on Second-day, and mean to make a beginning there and at Stroud. It does not follow that all the counties named on the other side should be visited. . . .'

On the other side of this sheet is the arrangements of districts referred to for Mr. Alexander and himself. Mr. Alexander was to take Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, &c., indeed all the southern and western counties, together with South Wales, Cork, and Waterford. Mr. Sturge himself to take the midland and northern counties, together with North Wales, Dublin, Belfast, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. A few days later he reports to the same correspondent that he had commenced operations in his own district under favourable auspices. 'I thought,' he says, 'thou would be pleased to hear that I have this week met the Anti-slavery committees, and some other of our friends, at Stroud, Gloucester, Tewkesbury, and Worcester, and that they have not only in all these places fully and unanimously approved of the principles upon which our new Society is based, and resolved to form auxiliaries to it, but have, with equal unanimity, approved of the general conference in London next year, and agreed to send one or more deputies to attend.' And through the following months we can trace the same incessant activity, moving from place to place, rallying and organising the friends of freedom for the great demon-

stration that was at hand, and by the singular force and fascination of his character, seldom failing to inoculate those with whom he came into contact with a portion of his own enthusiasm. Meanwhile he was keeping up an earnest correspondence with the leading abolitionists of America, with a view to secure a good representation from that country at the convention. The result of all this care and labour was, that a very generous response to the invitation of the committee was received, not only from all parts of the United Kingdom, but from the British colonies, the continent of Europe, and the United States. The first meeting of the conference was held at Freemason's Hall, on Friday, June 12, 1840. The members began to assemble before ten o'clock, and by eleven o'clock the spacious hall was filled with a body of between 500 and 600 delegates, together with a large number of visitors.

It was, indeed, a remarkable assembly. Those whose eyes are dazzled only by the glitter of rank, and fashion, and worldly fame, might find little there to attract their attention or command their esteem; but no man whose heart could be touched with sympathy for the wrongs of the oppressed, or with admiration for that noblest kind of heroism which seeks its reward in the triumphs of humanity and mercy, could glance along those thronging benches, without an emotion of singular interest and respect. For there was gathered no unworthy representation of 'the pledged philanthropy of earth.' There might be seen the veteran champions of the cause of the slave in the British Parliament, Buxton, and Lushington, and O'Connell, and Villiers, the great name of Brougham only being wanting, his shattered health having obliged him to be content with only sending words of cordial greeting to his old allies, by

letter. There were also the men who, by their varied and vigorous eloquence, had evoked and organised the public sentiment out of doors, which had clothed their parliamentary leaders with such resistless power before the legislature; men like John Burnet, and George Thompson, and John Scoble, and Samuel Bowly, and a score besides, hardly less worthy of mention, who had carried into every corner of the kingdom the sacred fire which had burst at length into such a blaze as to have illuminated the whole land.

There, likewise, were a 'faithful few among the faithless found' of the literary men of our country—for, unhappily, it must be confessed that the cause of emancipation in England has owed little to the influence of the fourth estate—in the persons of Thomas Campbell, and John Bowring, and Josiah Conder, and Colonel Thompson. The West Indies had sent William Knibb, and John Clark, and others, to represent the noble band of missionaries who had so long and bravely battled with the monster slavery on its own soil. From the United States had come some of the chosen men in that little gallant army of abolitionists who, amid infinite obloquy and scorn, were lifting up a banner in the name of the Lord, for righteousness and freedom in their own land; among whom were Birney and Stanton, Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips, and 'of honourable women not a few.' France had sent a considerable delegation, headed by the respected names of Isambert and Cremieux, who had already distinguished themselves in the senate and at the bar as the friends of the persecuted and oppressed. While scattered throughout the room might be seen scores and hundreds of the men and women, who, in all parts of the country, through evil report and good report, had, by their

counsels, and efforts, and unsparing liberality, sustained the cause of those that were ready to perish, the large majority consisting of the members of that Society whose noblest distinction it is to have ever been the foremost apostles of freedom and philanthropy.

Over this assembly presided the venerable Thomas Clarkson, his body bent beneath the burden of more than eighty years, but his heart beating as warmly as ever for the cause of the enslaved; while Joseph Sturge was felt by all to be the animating spirit of the scene, to whose influence and energy it was owing, in a main degree, that this large body of delegates had been brought together, whose ardent zeal pervaded every part of the proceedings, and whose gentle and generous temper did much to blend all elements into harmony.

The opening scene of the convention was one of the most solemn and thrilling ever witnessed in a public assembly. It has been described by Haydon, the painter, in language at once so picturesque and pathetic, that we cannot do better than borrow his words. He had been asked to attend professionally, to see whether such an assemblage might not be a fit subject for an historical picture. He had gone, as he acknowledges, reluctantly enough, with a little, probably, of that half-contemptuous feeling, with which men of his class too often look from a distance upon benevolent enterprises of this nature.

'On entering the meeting,' he says, 'at the time appointed, I saw at once I was in the midst of no common assembly. The venerable and benevolent heads which surrounded me, soon convinced me that materials existed of character and expression in the members present, provided any one moment of pictorial interest should occur. In a few minutes an unaffected man got up, and

informed the meeting that Thomas Clarkson would attend shortly; he begged no tumultuous applause might greet his entrance, as his infirmities were great, and he was too nervous to bear, without risk of injury to his health, any such expressions of their good feeling towards him. The Friend who addressed them was Joseph Sturge, a man whose whole life has been devoted to ameliorate the condition of the unhappy.

'In a few minutes the aged Clarkson came in, grey and bent, leaning on Joseph Sturge for support, and approached with feeble and tottering steps the middle of the convention. I had never seen him before, nor had most of the foreigners present: and the anxiety to look on him betrayed by all, was exceedingly unaffected and sincere. Immediately behind Thomas Clarkson were his daughter-in-law, the widow of his son, and his little grandson.

'Aided by Joseph Sturge and his daughter, Clarkson mounted to the chair, sat down in it as if to rest, and then in a tender feeble voice, appealed to the assembly for a few minutes' meditation before he opened the convention. The venerable old man put his hand simply to his forehead, as if in prayer, and the whole assembly followed his example; for a minute there was the most intense silence I ever felt. Having inwardly uttered a short prayer, he was again helped up; and bending forward, leaning on the table, he spoke to the great assembly as a patriarch standing near the grave, or as a kind father who felt an interest for his children. Every word he uttered was from his heart—he spoke tenderly, tremulously; and, in alluding to Wilberforce, acknowledged, just as an aged man would acknowledge, his decay of memory in forgetting many other dear friends whom he could not then recollect. After solemnly

urging the members to persevere to the last, till slavery was extinct, lifting his arm and pointing to heaven (his face quivering with emotion), he ended by saying: "May the Supreme Ruler of all human events, at whose disposal are, not only the hearts, but the intellects, of men—may He, in His abundant mercy, guide your councils and give His blessing upon your labours." There was a pause of a moment, and then, without an interchange of thought or even of look, the whole of this vast meeting, men and women, said, in a tone of subdued and deep feeling, "AMEN! AMEN!"

'To the reader not present it is scarcely possible to convey, without affectation, the effect on the imagination of one who, like myself, had never attended benevolent meetings, had no notion of such deep sincerity in any body of men, or of the awful and unaffected piety of the class I had been brought amongst. That deep-toned AMEN came on my mind like the knell of a departing curse; I looked about me on the simple and extraordinary people, ever ready with their purse and their person, for the accomplishment of their great object; and if ever sound was an echo to the sense, or if ever deep and undaunted meaning was conveyed to the depths of the soul by sound alone, the death-warrant of slavery all over the earth was boded by that AMEN!

'I have seen the most afflicting tragedies, imitative and real; but never did I witness in life or in the drama, so deep, so touching, so pathetic an effect produced on any great assembly as by the few unaffected, unsophisticated words of this aged and agitated person.

'The women wept, the men shook off their tears, unable to prevent their flowing; for myself, I was so affected and astonished that it was many minutes before I recovered sufficiently to perceive the moment of

interest I had longed for had come to pass—and this was the moment I immediately chose for the picture.'

There never, certainly, was an occasion on which the subject of slavery in every part of the world, and in all its aspects, relations, and influences, was brought before the public in so complete and comprehensive a manner as at this conference. Nor can it be doubted that it was the means of imparting a new impulse to the cause of emancipation throughout the civilised world.

CHAPTER XI.

VISIT TO AMERICA.

Relations of the Society of Friends to the Anti-Slavery Question in America — Their early exertions against Slavery. John Woolman and Anthony Benezet — Change in their feelings and conduct — J. G. Whittier — Letter from him — Mr. Sturge's letter to him — Letters from Dr. Wardlaw — Mr. Cobden and Thomas Clarkson on his departure to America — Dreadful storm in going out — Letters to his sister — New York — Philadelphia — Yearly Meeting of Friends there — Feeling respecting the Anti-Slavery Movement—Baltimore—Visits a Slave-trading Establishment — The Baptist Triennial Convention — Wilmington — America and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society — Runaway Slaves — Albany — Interview with Governor Seward — Feeling among Friends respecting the Slavery Question — Visits Dr. Channing — At Providence — Addresses a letter to the owner of the Slave-trading Establishment — Memorial to the President refused — Mr. Sturge publishes it — His supposed influence on the debates at Washington — Tries to heal divisions among Abolitionists — Effects of his visit to America — Letters from L. Tappan and J. G. Whittier — His own estimate of its effects — Letter to T. Harvey.

No sooner was the conference over, and the various practical matters arising out of it in a fair way of being carried into effect, than Mr. Sturge began to consider in what direction his services would be farther useful, in the same cause. From one of his letters already cited, it appears that in the early part of 1839 he contemplated a visit to the Brazils, to enquire into the operations of the slave system there. But such was the disturbed condition of our own country, and especially of the town of Birmingham, at the time, that he felt it his duty to relinquish the project:

'I am sorry,' he says in a letter to Mr. Tappan under date of July 31, 1839, 'for the difficulty there appears to be in any two men visiting the Brazils and your Southern States. When I wrote thee I had some thought of going to the former, but duties of a very pressing nature are likely to keep me at home, I believe, for the next twelve months. The state of our town has been alarming, and our peace principles are likely to be brought closely to the test. I should not, I think, consider myself in any personal danger if I went to the Brazils, and if I were, I trust I should not be deterred from going by the fear of it, if I saw it my place, and felt it my duty to go. Indeed, so much has been said about the martyrdom of abolitionists, and so very few have been a sacrifice to their principles, that I think the danger is supposed to be much greater than it is, if the party who went acted judiciously.'

Mr. Sturge, however, felt that the stronghold of slavery was in the United States, and he had for sometime entertained the idea of visiting that country, especially on a mission to the members of his own Society. In the earlier history of the anti-slavery movement in America, the Friends had taken a very prominent part. Its origin, indeed, may be ascribed to the labours of two admirable men belonging to that body, John Woolman and Anthony Benezet, who, long before the public conscience had awoke in this country to a sense of the sinfulness of slavery, had perceived and proclaimed that truth with an apostolic boldness and fervour that produced a great impression, not only within their own religious circle, but on public sentiment generally in many of the States.

It was under the impulse which they had created that the first anti-slavery societies were established about the period of the American Revolution, with which Judge Jay, Benjamin Franklin, Dr. Rush, and other

distinguished statesmen associated themselves, though they were mainly composed of members of the Society of Friends. But it would appear that, more recently, a different course had been generally adopted by the Society. Partly from the notion that religious men must not meddle with politics, partly from a too fastidious apprehension of compromising their own peculiarities by cooperation with Christians of other denominations, and partly also, it may be feared, from a decline in the earnestness and moral courage which had distinguished their predecessors, the Friends in America had, for many years, taken very little active part in the Anti-slavery agitation. They had, indeed, cleared themselves of all direct participation in and complicity with the evil thing, having adopted as a rule of discipline the exclusion of slave-holders from religious fellowship, and they had, moreover, from time to time formally uttered their 'testimony' against it. But beyond that they did not care to go. Instead of being, as their brethren in this country ever have been, the most active promoters of the movement for freedom, they, for the most part, held aloof, and did not decidedly come forth 'to the help of the Lord against the mighty.' This was a matter of deep lamentation to Mr. Sturge, and he determined to go among them, in the hope of doing something to engage them in more active interest on behalf of the cause that was so dear to his heart. Combined with this there were, also, other objects, especially that of international peace, which he hoped to subserve by visiting America. Among the Friends in that country there were a few like-minded with himself on the subject of slavery, who felt there was a call upon them in the name of justice and humanity, before which all sectarian pruderies ought to give place, to

join with earnest men of every creed, who were willing to labour for the simple object of putting away the great abomination which was the curse and calamity of the land. Among these stood conspicuous the name of John Greenleaf Whittier, now known through the world as the poet laureate of freedom and philanthropy, whose animating strains had from the first roused and cheered on the small band of brave men who then constituted the forlorn hope of abolitionism in the United States. The following letter from Mr. Whittier to Mr. Sturge, though written at a considerably later date, may be fitly introduced here, as giving us a glimpse into the state of feeling which prevailed in the religious society to which he belonged, and the embarrassing position which he and the few other thorough-going abolitionists occupied in that body:—

'My dear Friend,—I was truly glad to receive thy letter by the last steamer, and am especially obliged to thee for the statement of the substance of thy remarks in your Yearly Meeting. I freely acknowledge that the few of us who feel deeply on the subject in our Society here, have sensibly sustained a loss by neglecting to speak the fitting word which at times has pressed for utterance in our meetings. Most of us belong to the younger class of members, and we have felt it a hard thing to stand up against the weight and influence of ministers and elders. When the decision was taken in our Yearly Meeting, shutting up our Meeting-houses against the friends of the slave, three or four of us who felt constrained to stand up and dissent from the body, were subjected to the charge of insurbordination, and considered "out of the unity." For myself, I may as well admit to thee, knowing as thou dost the state of things among us, that I do not look to our Society for any official action, in its Society capacity, against slavery. If, within the last ten years, anything has been done for the cause of freedom in this country, our Society cannot

claim any credit for it. God, in His all-wise Providence, has raised up *other* instrumentalities to do His work. As a Friend —as a sectarian—I sometimes regret this, but as a friend of suffering humanity, I rejoice that wider and more powerful influences than any which could proceed from our Society, have been put in operation against the great sin of my country. My heart opens to every friend of the slave, irrespective of his sect or his creed. The anti-slavery cause has not, I trust, made me less a Quaker, but it has given me a more enlarged charity, a deeper sense of the universal brotherhood, and an entire willingness to labour in whatever way Providence may open, and with whatever companionship it may afford me for the promotion of the well-being of my fellow-men. This cause has been to me what the vision on the house-top of Cornelius was to Peter—it has destroyed all narrow sectarian prejudices, and made me willing to be *a man among men*.'

Though, prior to his visit to America, Mr. Sturge had no personal acquaintance with Mr. Whittier, yet, knowing well his sentiments and sympathies, he wrote to that gentleman, explaining with characteristic modesty the design he cherished, and inviting his cooperation.

'DEAR FRIEND,—Though we are personally unknown to each other, I am about to open my mind to thee as to a very old and intimate friend. I am seriously intending to pay a private visit to America for a few weeks or perhaps months, principally with the following objects :—To promote an entire unity of action and cooperation between the *British* and *Foreign* Anti-Slavery Society, and the *American* and *Foreign* Anti-Slavery Society, including *all* that will act upon our principles and not mix up other matters with it.

'To ascertain the feeling and judgment of our American Friends as to the propriety of holding any future conventions; and, if they are in favour of it, when and where the next should be held.

'To see, *privately*, if there are any means of removing the objections which have hitherto prevented our American

Friends from taking part in the movements of anti-slavery societies, provided they are both, in theory and *practice*, kept entirely distinct from all other matters.

'Apart and distinct from the anti-slavery objects, I mean also to take the opportunity of ascertaining, as I go along, what elements there are in America for holding at a future period a conference of nations for the promotion of permanent and universal peace. My intention is to avoid altogether appearing, and especially speaking, in public (for which latter I am quite unqualified, if there was no other objection), but to visit in private parties the persons who may most be depended upon for properly working our cause. The earliest time I look to for leaving England is by the British Queen, on the 10th of next month; and, if I go at all, which is yet very uncertain, I may not go till near a month later. Now, thou wilt see that on such an expedition I shall want a companion uniting with my views, with a pretty general knowledge of the individual character and standing both of the abolitionists and the members of the Society of Friends in your land; and I wish to ask thee to be kind enough to be that companion, of course allowing me to pay every kind of expense, &c. &c., to which such a journey might subject thee. At all events, allow me to press upon thee that in the event of my writing thee by the next Boston steam-packet, to say I am coming by the British Queen, thou wilt be kind enough to be in New York to meet me to give me thy advice and counsel, and if our friends there should unite in opinion that it will be desirable for thee to accompany me, thou wilt feel it a duty from which thou canst not feel excused. I am aware that thy health may appear to thee to be a sufficient objection, and if it is, this is a point upon which I cannot of course say a word to urge thee beyond thy strength; but I am not without hopes that the journey might be of service to thee in this respect.

'Thine respectfully,

'Joseph Sturge.

'Birmingham: 2-9, 1841.'

Mr. Sturge's intention of going to America was very little known. It could not, however, be concealed from those who were associated with him in public work, many of whom sent him cordial greetings on his departure. Rev. Dr. Wardlaw wrote :—'I wish you, my honoured friend, a safe and prosperous expedition under the care of that kind Providence without which "a sparrow falleth not to the ground," and of that Divine Redeemer whose special commission it was to "preach deliverance to the captives," "to set at liberty them that are bound," "to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." Oh that he may speedily break every yoke both of spiritual and secular oppression.'

Mr. Cobden, however, who was bearing the heat and burden of the Free Trade agitation, and knew the value to the cause in which he was engaged of Mr. Sturge's high character and stedfast principles, grudged the absence of his friend from England at such a moment :—

'Could I have seen you (he says), I should have endeavoured to dissuade you from leaving us; but your decision is, I have no doubt, come to after a due consideration of what you believe to be your duty, and with a full regard to the best interests of humanity. I do, however, see in the present state of things in this country much to create alarm in patriotic minds. . . . When you are in America you will be able to take a dispassionate glance at our condition at home, and I hope you will return with a determination to throw all the weight of your talents and moral influence into the scale of the poor and oppressed millions of your countrymen. Your letter will be of infinite use to us at the present juncture; it is worthy of you.* We shall publish it in the next circular. With my most ardent wishes for your health and happiness, believe me, 'Very truly yours,

'Richard Cobden.'

* This is explained further on.

But it must have been specially gratifying to Mr. Sturge to receive on the eve of his departure for America the following letter of counsel and encouragement from the venerable patriarch of abolitionism in England:—

'Playford Hall: March 5, 1841.

'My dear Friend,—Though I feel very sorry for your departure to a distant land, yet I can conceive how it may have come into your mind *in the shape of a duty*, as at the head of our great cause here, to know of yourself, and personally, how things are now going on in the United States concerning it without trusting to others. I am sure that such knowledge will be most useful to you in your future management of our cause.

'It strikes me that if I were going to America in the same situation with yourself, at the head of the Anti-slavery society in England, that I should try to know the *general disposition* of the Americans to the cause, and the different opinions respecting the *practicability* of the abolition of slavery, and what are likely to be the obstacles to it. Also into what parties, and particularly leading parties, the Union is divided on this subject, and the bearings of each and their influences on this great question. Also the number of Anti-slavery committees, their separate constitutions, their present disposition and temper, and in what they differ from each other, previously to an attempt, and with the view of an attempt to reconcile them and bring them into one, so that they should adopt the same principles and measures. I should endeavour, further, to instil into these committees *as a vital principle*, the necessity of not mixing other subjects with ours. This cause is a pure and holy cause, and must be kept unspotted as far as it is possible. There must be no commixture with it, and they should abstain from all political as well as fanatic excitements. . . . . I do not see what else I have to offer to your consideration, for I am clear that you must be guided by what you see and learn in America. You must be on the watch and take advantage of incidents as they occur, and who

knows but under Providence such incidents may arise as shall direct your proceedings the right way. It appears to me that you may gain a great deal by seeing Dr. Channing. I am much pleased with his work, and I wish I could see him to thank him. He deprecates force, and has recourse only to just and moral means. I should be very much inclined to follow any advice he may give you in America.

'I must desire you before you leave London to give my kind regards to the London committee, and tell them that I shall be desirous of executing their commands, and of giving them all the assistance in my power in the same manner while you are absent as if you were at home in England. They must not hesitate if I can be of any service to them to write to me immediately.

'And now, my dear friend, I repeat that we are sorry that you are so soon going to leave us, but we must submit to this calamity from the belief that it will be more than counterbalanced by a great preponderance of good. I do really think that the Divine blessing will follow you, for I cannot conceive that you could be going on any errand more acceptable to God, than the attempt to remove an evil—the greatest physical and moral evil that ever afflicted the human race. My spirit will certainly be with you wherever you go.

'Poor little Tommy! I cannot tell by what means you have made an impression on him, but the child is greatly affected at hearing of your departure, and he has nothing to counterbalance his sorrow, for he is not of an age to comprehend all the good you may do. I am, my dear friend, with an anxious and earnest desire for the preservation of your health and of yourself, and for success to our good cause,

'Yours affectionately,
'Thomas Clarkson.'

As Mr. Sturge, on his return from America, published a volume containing an account of his visit, it is not necessary that we should enter here into very minute

details. That work gives much valuable information, not only on the whole subject of slavery and the slave trade, together with the labours, sufferings, and schisms, of the abolitionists in the United States, but on the more general questions of peace and temperance, juvenile crime and prison discipline, the operation of the voluntary principle in religion and education, the condition of the Indian aboriginal tribes, and of course a good deal respecting the state of the Society of Friends in that country. We have, however, in our possession a series of letters he wrote to his sister during his absence, in which he enters more fully and freely upon various matters connected with the anti-slavery cause in America than it was thought expedient to make public at the time. Some of the revelations they contain, especially when read in the light of the awful events that have recently occurred, seem to us full of significance and instruction. They prove to what an extent religious principle had become palsied by contact with slavery even in that Society which was least under its influences, and how dangerous is the tendency to which all religious bodies are exposed of substituting zeal on behalf of the 'mint and anise and cummin' of sectarian forms for the weightier matters of the law, 'judgment, mercy, and faith.' He embarked at Portsmouth on board the British Queen steam packet on March 10, 1841. On the night of May 18, they encountered one of the most awful hurricanes ever witnessed by the oldest sailor on board, the same in all probability in which the unfortunate President, coming in the opposite direction, foundered, for she was never heard of more. 'From this date to the 24th,' he says, 'we experienced a succession of storms of indescribable violence and severity, which, at some intervals, caused

great and I believe very just alarm for the safety of the ship.'

'New York: April 9, 1841.

'We arrived at New York on the night of the 4th, and the next morning being the First day, I took breakfast on board and went at once to meeting. At the close, I left without speaking to any Friend, and went to Lewis Tappan's to dinner, and afterwards spent two or three hours with J. G. Whittier, whom I find all I could wish, for a companion. He is willing to accompany me as far as his health will permit, and we agree in sentiment, I believe, upon all material points. On third day we met rather a large party at a Friend's of the name of Shotwell, amongst the rest Mahlon Day, J. J. Gurney's companion to the West Indies. I did not feel much encouraged by this meeting, but J. G. Whittier thinks some good has been done. I have also seen the editors of two of the leading newspapers, one of them a brother-in-law of Dr. Wayland's and a good specimen of an American colonisationist and prejudice against colour. . . . . Do not be uneasy about me, my dearest sister, for though I feel entirely unworthy of being the instrument in removing the smallest part of human suffering, I have not for a moment doubted, amidst the greatest apparent danger to which I have been exposed in crossing the ocean, the propriety of the step I have taken in coming here; and though as yet I hardly see how any good is to arise from it, I believe I can cheerfully leave the result to Him who orders all things well.'

'Philadelphia: April 12, 1841.

'My dearest Sister,—J. G. Whittier and I left New York early on 7th day morning, and came to Burlington, where I took up my quarters at Stephen Grellet's, who, with his wife, received me with the greatest kindness. I found him cordially with us, both in principle and on the propriety of uniting with others on the Abolition question, as Friends do in England. This also appears to be the case with an excellent and venerable friend of the name of John Cox, of

the age of eighty-seven, whom we went out to drink tea with, and who, I understand, sits at the head of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. There is, however, such a powerful body against uniting with others, or, indeed, taking any active part in the Abolition cause, that I fear very little progress will be made in this Yearly Meeting. For I found that Stephen Grellet considered, that if he publicly joined the abolitionists of other religious denominations, it must be at the expense of his influence with the Society, and this of course I could not urge upon him . . . . . I think I shall better understand the position of the Anti-slavery cause, as regards Friends and others, by coming to this country, which will be of advantage.'

'Philadelphia: April 25, 1841.

'The Yearly Meeting lasted from 2nd day morning to 6th day afternoon, and I attended the whole except the last, at which no business remained to be transacted. In some respects the arrangements for conducting the business are better than ours, and it is certainly carried forward with more despatch; but there is still less freedom of remark among the young and middle-aged members than with us. The attendance on the men's side the first two or three days was, I think, about equal to the average of our Yearly Meeting in London, and at the latter sittings, certainly considerably more. I am informed that the women's meeting is still larger. The general tenor of the queries is much the same as ours, but there is one relating to spirituous liquors, on which a report is sent up from all the Quarterly Meetings, as to the number of members who used them, or offered them to others. The number reported was I think fifty-nine, and there was some discussion as to whether the rule of discipline should be tightened, so as to end in disownment, which I understand is the case in some other Yearly Meetings. It was, however, concluded to let it remain unaltered for the present, and further labour was recommended. The number of children of an age for education through the whole Yearly Meeting is reported. I think it was between 1,800, and 1,900, and

those attending no school between 50 and 100. There was a report of the committee in reference to the Indians, which contained a very affecting letter from their chiefs, showing their great grief at their forcible removal from the West. Friends seem doing their best on this subject, but apparently with very little practical effect upon the Government. There was a very good and plain minute from the London Yearly Meeting, to the Meeting of Sufferings, here read in the meeting at large. This, and the reading of an epistle on the Anti-slavery question, which was adopted by the Yearly Meeting last year, produced a considerable effect, and no Friend attempted to object to a proposition that was made to have it printed for general circulation among the members of the Yearly Meeting. I have had several private opportunities of discussing the relative course of Friends here and in England, once in the presence of two or three hundred Friends at the close of the Yearly Meeting (though with some opposition in certain quarters), who met to hear a statement of the results of emancipation in the West Indies from John Candler, who, with his wife, arrived after the Yearly Meeting had commenced. I was called upon to say a few words, and I briefly alluded to the principles and objects of the British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society. I have thought it best to avoid anything of a public nature, as I have found some Friends here, who stand high in the Society, that are favourable to our cause in England, and through them I am likely to get a private meeting at the house of T. Wister, when I expect to meet some of those who I consider are prejudiced on the other side. . . . . Some of the oldest and most valued Friends here in the Yearly Meeting, who stand high in the Society, such as S. Grellet, John Cox, and Thomas Wister, are quite favourable to the course adopted by English Friends, but they feel evidently in bondage to others, and at their time of life—all, I believe, upwards of eighty—I could not ask them to place themselves in a position so painful to their feelings, as in the present state of affairs here they must do, by joining Anti-slavery Societies.'

'New York: May 15, 1841.

'We arrived at Baltimore in the afternoon of the 28th of last month. While there I got admittance to one of the principal slave-trading establishments in that city, which was built in a public street within the last two or three years. The name of the owner is Hope H. Slaughter. I told him we were strangers, and having heard much of such establishments, we were desirous to see one with our own eyes. He immediately consented, and with the greatest apparent readiness. It was kept very clean, and the rooms, secured by strong iron doors, in which the negroes were usually locked up, are placed behind an open yard with high walls. Into this yard they are allowed to go in the daytime. There were not more than five or six slaves in the establishment at the time we were there. He said he had sent a batch off to New Orleans on the previous 7th day. After he had shown us over the premises, and whilst he had the door of his office locked upon us, he entered upon a curious defence of his trade, which showed, I think, some remaining signs of conscience. J. G. Whittier said he observed he would not look us in the face as he spoke. He did not attempt to controvert the position which I stated to him, that we held that slavery and the slave-trade were inconsistent with the Christian precept, "to do unto others as we would they should do unto us," but said he should be as ready as anyone to have the system abolished, if they were compensated for their property; that he was born in a slave state; that his mother had been a member of a Wesleyan church for fifty years, and that though he had not joined a Christian church himself, he had never sworn an oath, nor committed an immoral act in his life; that the negroes were better off when he sold them than they were in the hands of those of whom he purchased them, and that they not unfrequently came to him to ask him to purchase them; that he never parted families while they were in his possession; and altogether made out an unanswerable case, to show that the slave-dealer was not worse than the slaveholder. From this establishment we went at once to attend the Baptist

Triennial Convention. When we entered, our Anti-slavery friends in that body were asking some questions with a view to elicit whether the Southern delegates did not come pledged to vote off Elon Galusha* from the vice-presidency of the Missionary board, but the Southern men appeared confident of their strength, and bore cross-examination with more temper than they possibly would if they had had any fear of a defeat. But I confess I should have been puzzled to have decided which had the most conscience—the slave-dealer whom we had just left, or the supporters of slavery in this convention. To put a stop to discussion it was proposed that Fuller, a large slaveholding Baptist minister, and Elon Galusha, should pray, and after some further discussion it was carried. Galusha's prayer was a very appropriate one. They then went to the ballot, and to our surprise and gratification, though there were said to be between forty and fifty of those present from one slave State—I think South Carolina—and some of the free States were scarcely represented, Elon Galusha, was thrown off only by a majority of seven, the number in his favour being 117, and against 124; these might under the circumstances be considered a moral triumph. On our return in the afternoon, I understood (for we were not then present) that E. Galusha made such an admirable address that a number who voted against him expressed their regret. There were not a few, I understand, who came from the free States who voted against him.

'At Baltimore we were told of a woman and child who had been sold the week before to the owner of the establishment we visited, and whose husband, a free man, had been ineffectually offering for years to bind himself to raise the money to redeem them; but being unable, his wife and child had been sent off, they said they had no doubt, with the lot going to New Orleans, and he would not in all probability see them again. These things are so common here as scarcely to excite sympathy, even with the best of the inhabitants. I

* An eminent and excellent minister of the Baptist body, who had given great offence to some of his brethren by his anti-slavery sentiments.

find, however, that the slave-dealer, though he keeps his carriage and lives in style, is rather shunned by the respectable inhabitants.

'At Wilmington there are some sincere abolitionists both among friends and the seceders, though I think they might abolish slavery in the State, which contains only about 5,000 slaves, if they would exert themselves. At the Baptist Anti-slavery Convention at New York they passed resolutions—of which I hope to forward a copy—one of which was a pledge to promote a good delegation to England in 1842 if a convention should be fixed; and the other unanimously affirming the resolutions of the London Convention with regard to church-fellowship. I returned to Philadelphia on the 6th. The party who have the control of the "Friend" paper would not even admit an advertisement of J. J. Gurney's letters, which Professor Cleveland is getting out in a newspaper shape.

'At New York I have attended this week the anniversary of the American and Foreign Anti-slavery Society, where I made a few remarks. Two meetings of business followed, at the last of which I entered a little into the question of a future convention, and there is a clause in the report confirming the resolution of the committee in favour of another being held in London in 1842. The movement in France and some other considerations lead me now to think the cause will suffer if it is not held then. There have likewise been some large and interesting meetings held to show the progress of the Amistad captives, at which about fifteen of them have been present, and though the admission was half a dollar each, crowds were present; upon the whole it is evident the feeling, especially in this city, is rapidly improving. I am told also there is a change for the better in Philadelphia, though there is, I believe, no city in the known world, whether slave or free, where the prejudice against colour is so strong as in this city of *brotherly love*.'

'New Bedford, West Chester: 5, 21.

'In the afternoon I started for Albany on the Light Boat with E. Galusha, J. Leavitt, and a friend of the name of

Shotwell, who is a good anti-slavery man, and with whom I have concluded to lodge at New York next week. When it was getting late at night I observed a black man and woman sitting on the lower deck, and, supposing they could not get accommodation on account of their colour, I went and spoke to them, telling them I was an abolitionist. This, and probably my dress, made them disclose that they had two days before escaped from slavery, and were on their road to Canada. The man lived at Washington, but his wife at Virginia, a few miles distant. They had obtained leave to go to a wedding on 7th day morning, and they were not expected home until 1st day night; and having obtained forged certificates of freedom, for which they had paid twenty-five dollars each, they had come by railroad and steamboat so rapidly that, though they had lost a day at New York, being fearful of making any enquiries there, yet we calculated no one could be up at Albany after them till the afternoon of the next day. Elon Galusha had a brother-in-law living about thirty miles from Albany out of the beaten track, with whom he thought they would be safe until pursuit was over, and having paid their fare for them in a conveyance in that direction, I do not think there is much danger of their being taken. Indeed, this is now so difficult that I believe the slave-owners seldom pursue them beyond Pennsylvania. They appeared well informed of the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies, and of the proceedings of abolitionists in the Northern States of the Union, and said that a number of their acquaintance would attempt to make their escape if they succeeded.'

'New York: 5, 15.

'I have been pressing our Friends to attend at Albany and canvass the members of the local Legislature of New York to grant the Elective Franchise to the people of colour and repeal one or two oppressive acts towards them, and I hope they have good prospect of success. I had an interview both with the Governor (W. H. Seward) and the Lieutenant Governor, from whom I had the most cordial reception; both avowed themselves in favour of wiping away all distinction

on account of colour. The late correspondence between the former and the Governor of Virginia on account of his refusal to give up some persons who had been accused of aiding runaway slaves to escape, thou hast probably heard in the reports. It had done great good to the anti-slavery cause and raised the Governor of New York high in the estimation of abolitionists. On my arrival at New York early in 4th day morn I proceeded at once to Hertford, Connecticut. In the evening I attended an open sitting of the Connecticut Legislature to hear some statements in support of a petition for equalising the privileges of the white and coloured citizens in the State. This was ably and forcibly done by two speakers (one a black man) at considerable length; there was a crowded attendance to hear them, and much interest manifested. I am not hopeful of so speedy a result in the state of New York.'

'June 29, 1841.

'I almost forget if I mentioned anything with regard to the Yearly Meeting at Newport which closed on 5th day the 17th inst. I am thankful I was present, that I might be able more clearly to realise the state of things. It is about as bad as the worst description we have had of it can make it as far as the leading influences of the society are concerned, but there is a very large portion who most decidedly sympathise with the ground we take in England, and yet these are so entirely silent in their meetings that a comparative few manage to have things entirely their own way. They referred a proposition from one of their own quarterly meetings, as well as the London Anti-slavery epistle, with scarcely any discussion, to a committee who are nominated, I believe, almost without exception from those who were against any Anti-slavery action. Indeed, in this meeting it is admitted that an active abolitionist is, by an understanding of the ruling influences, generally omitted on meeting appointments. The committee, of course, in their report recommended that the whole matter be referred to the Meeting for Sufferings. An epistle to England passed without remark, which contains a paragraph directly dis-

countenancing Friends joining Anti-slavery associations, while this and all the others have abundance of expressions of feeling and sympathy on the subject. I believe that I mentioned to thee that a similar application to the one granted at New York was not complied with here, but on a simple intimation that I would be at our Hotel on the 4th day evening, not less, I think, than 200 Friends came, and I made a similar, though more brief statement to the one I did at New York. I have had some rather plain talk with one or two of the leading Friends who are taking this, as it appears to me, very unsound ground. If I have anything to regret, I believe it is speaking rather too plainly and warmly upon the subject. I hope my visit will prevent matters getting worse amongst Friends, and their refusal to let us have the use of the meeting-house is, I think, likely ultimately to serve the cause. I am preparing a letter which I intend to publish and to circulate extensively before I leave. . . . .

'Dr. Channing was at a seat he has on Rhode Island, and we visited him one morning to breakfast with J. and M. Candler and S. Parsons, jun.; and once J. G. Whittier and I called upon him alone. I was much pleased with what I saw of him, and I believe his heart is very much in the Abolition cause. He suggested that a petition should be got up and generally signed from the Northern States praying that they might be relieved of all support of slavery. . . . .

'At Providence I was furnished by a solicitor with a copy of some most disgraceful laws on the State statute-book, in reference to slaves and people of colour, which I mean to send to the Meeting of Sufferings, and to tell them the opinion of some of the respectable inhabitants, that if *Friends* exert themselves these laws might be easily repealed. J. G. Whittier and myself went to New Bedford, where we spent 1st day the 20th. At the meeting was Jeremiah Hubbard, a Friend from Indiana, who is a Colonisationist, and opposed to the Abolition movement; and at the New York and Rhode Island Yearly Meetings, where he took an active part, his influence was, of course, against us. But in the morning

meeting he preached so much and so well against slavery, that had it come from a Friend who *acted* in the Abolition cause, it would, I have no doubt, have subjected him to private advice. In the evening there was a public meeting, at which J. Hubbard spoke at great length, and I was pleased to see that the coloured people were placed, with little or no distinction, among the other parts of the congregation. J. H. and I spoke mostly in reference to the Abolition question in other parts of the world, and avoided touching much upon what was likely to give uneasiness to cautious Friends; but I hope the meeting did some good.'

There surely is a lesson taught us by the facts disclosed in the above correspondence, which it would be culpable to overlook at such a moment as this. Is not the conviction forced upon us with a painful distinctness, that there has been a grievous lack of fidelity on the part of the various Christian bodies in America as respects 'the accursed thing' that was defiling their camp? Is it possible to resist the suggestion, that if they had only been faithful to duty and to God, they might long ago have stayed the moral pestilence which is now bringing so fearful a retribution upon the country? It had become almost a matter of boast among the respectable, and especially among the religious, portion of the community in the United States, that, shrinking with a sentimental delicacy from contact with such coarse elements, they had ceased to take any living active interest in political affairs. The Society of Friends particularly, as is obvious from the letters we have just cited, excused themselves from bearing part in the anti-slavery agitation, on the plea that secular politics were something common and unclean, which they could not touch without soiling their own purity. A vague sentiment of the same sort

pervades large classes of the religious community in our own country. But is not this practical asceticism utterly at variance with the whole spirit and intention of the Gospel? Have Christians, who are placed in the midst of society by their Master expressly that they may become 'the salt of the earth,' any right to shrink from their responsibilities as citizens, on the pretence of guarding their own spirituality from danger? Was it ever intended that, in a world abounding with evil which can be vanquished only by the power of Christian influence as revealed through personal character and exertion, those who profess to have received into their hearts the principle of a higher and purer life should abandon the government of society to the uncontrolled dominion of what they are apt enough to designate a sordid worldly ambition, while *they* seclude themselves in an artificial circle of sanctity, nursing their own religious emotions, and

> 'Pampering the coward heart
> With feelings all too delicate for use?'

Do not the past history and present condition of the United States press such questions as these with solemn emphasis on the attention of Christian men everywhere?

Joseph Sturge, at any rate, with a courageous loyalty to conscience from which he never shrank, bravely did his duty as respects all the classes with whom he was brought into contact in America. To the slave-trader at Baltimore, whose establishment he had visited, he wrote a letter of faithful Christian admonition, in which he besought him, 'by his hopes of peace here and hereafter,' to abandon his occupation. 'I need not say,' he remarks, 'that my feelings were painfully exercised in looking over thy buildings, fitted up with bolts and

bars, for the reception of human beings for sale. A sense of the misery and suffering of the unfortunate slaves who have been from time to time confined there —of their separation from home and kindred—and of the dreary prospect before them of a life of unrequited toil in the South and South-west, rested heavily upon me. I could there realise the true nature of the system of slavery. I was in a market-house for human flesh, where humanity is degraded to a level with the brute, and where children of our common Father in Heaven, and for whom our blessed Redeemer offered up the atoning sacrifice of His blood, were bargained for and sold like beasts that perish. . . . . I would beseech thee,' he says in conclusion, 'to listen to that voice which I am persuaded sometimes urges thee to "put away the evil of thy doings," to "do justice and love mercy," and *thus* cease to draw upon thyself the curse of those merchants of Tyre who "traded in the persons of men."'

He was also the bearer of an address, signed by the venerable Thomas Clarkson, from the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to the President of the United States. He was desirous of presenting this in person; but he found, on inquiry, that it would be very difficult to obtain an audience for the purpose, as no member of Congress appeared willing to undertake the unpopular service of introducing the bearer of such a document. He therefore wrote a letter to the President, informing him that he had this address in charge, and asking permission to wait upon him and place it in his hands. To this no reply was received, nor did the President make the slightest allusion to it when Mr. Sturge was subsequently introduced to him. He had no mind, however, to be balked of his object by

this discourtesy. He therefore drew up a paper, addressed 'To the Abolitionists of the United States,' in which, while giving a copy of the address, he described the attempt he had vainly made to bring it under the cognisance of the Chief Officer of the Republic, adding quietly, that 'memorials of a similar character had been presented to different heads of governments in other parts of the world, and had been uniformly received with marked respect.' He expatiated also at some length, and with deep feeling, upon the sorrowful scenes he had witnessed in the district of Columbia, under the very shadow of the capitol — the slave-trading establishments where human beings, walled in as in a jail, 'herded together like cattle for the market;' and the city prison, built and maintained by the Federal government, 'an old and loathsome building,' crowded with coloured prisoners, some of them guilty of no offence, but placed in those cells because the slave-dealers found it convenient to make use of them as a place of deposit and market for their slaves. Copies of this paper were sent to the President, and to each member of the Senate and House of Representatives. It was extensively republished in the newspapers, North and South, anti-slavery and pro-slavery, and brought down upon its author a plentiful share of abuse. It is probable that it produced a considerable impression upon the minds of many. There was, at any rate, a curious illustration afforded in an article which appeared in the 'New York Herald' (then, as ever, the faithful watch-dog of slavery) of the alarm which his presence and supposed influence at Washington inspired in the pro-slavery ranks. It happened that while he was in that city the question of what was called the 'Gag law' was discussed in Congress; that is, a rule adopted by

the House of Representatives, by which petitions for the abolition of slavery in the district of Columbia were laid upon the table without being read or referred to, which was tantamount to their rejection. Mr. Sturge had the pleasure of witnessing the brave struggles of the venerable John Quincy Adams to prevent the re-enactment of this rule, in which he happily succeeded. Whereupon the 'New York Herald' proclaimed: 'Joseph Sturge is now at Washington, using every means in his power to procure the abolition of slavery in the district of Columbia. It was principally through his sinister influence that the decision in the House of Representatives, the other day, resulted in favour of the abolitionists; and what he may effect before he gets through with his schemes there, it is impossible to say. Let the Southern delegation in Congress look after this Sturge.'

Mr. Sturge felt it right, moreover, to publish a respectful but honest appeal to the members of the Society of Friends in the States, beseeching them not to allow themselves to be deterred by sectarian scruples and restraints from entering heartily into the movement going on around them on behalf of the oppressed. Adverting to the objection he found current in Quakerly circles, he says:—

'If this good cause be really endangered by popular excitement and the indiscretion of its imprudent advocates the obligation of consistent Friends to be found at their posts, faithfully maintaining the testimony of truth on its behalf, is greatly increased; and it is under such circumstances that I think I have seen the peculiar advantage and protection to our young Friends in England, of having their elder brethren with them, aiding them by their sympathy, as well as by their advice and counsel. I am persuaded that those

who are called to occupy the foremost ranks in society cannot be too careful not to impose a burden upon tender consciences by discouraging, either directly or indirectly, a course of conduct which is sanctioned by the precepts and examples of our Divine Master, lest they alienate from us some of His disciples, and thereby greatly injure the Society they are so laudably anxious to "keep unspotted from the world."'

At the time when Mr. Sturge visited America, there existed, unhappily, among the abolitionists of that country serious divisions, which greatly impaired their power for good, and which were not always marked by the same manly Christian forbearance as had restrained similar differences of opinion in England. Among other evil effects of these feuds, not the least was this—that they afforded a ready excuse to a large class of religious persons, who, in a conflict between conscience and a prudential regard to their own interest and ease, eagerly seized on any pretext for siding with the latter and for holding aloof from the Anti-Slavery Societies. They were glad therefore of the plea that the internal dissensions which prevailed in the ranks of the abolitionists proved that they consisted of turbulent men, association with whom was neither pleasant nor profitable.

This state of things was a great grief to Mr. Sturge, and he did his utmost in social converse with the leaders of various parties to allay the ill-feeling between them that sometimes ran high, and to persuade them, if they could not unite in one organisation, to pursue their several courses without assailing each other, and thus betraying their weakness to the common foe, against whom their united strength was at that time feeble enough.

It is impossible, of course, accurately to estimate

what amount of good was produced by his visit to America, for that subtle force which we call influence is of all other things the most difficult to measure and weigh. It is certain, however, that his friends in that country believed it to have been largely beneficial. Mr. Lewis Tappan, writing to him when he was on the eve of embarking on his return to Europe, says :—

'It would be wholly out of my power to convey to you the sense I have of the value of your services and counsels during your present visit to this country. I have no doubt this visit—your interviews, conversations, letters, &c., have done incalculable good, and have endeared you to many in this country, who will feel it to be a happiness and a privilege to follow you hereafter with their good wishes and their prayers. May the Lord abundantly reward you for this labour of love, and take you "on eagle's wings" to your home again, there to labour for many years in the cause of abolition and general philanthropy.'

Mr. Whittier also refers repeatedly in his after communications to the impression which he left upon his own religious body. We subjoin a few extracts from his letters. Thus, writing from Philadelphia while Mr. Sturge was yet in the country, he says :—

'Thy visits and labours have done great good; prejudices have been softened, attention aroused, and deep feeling called out in many minds. . . . I have been among some of our Friends to-day, and have been pleased to find the impression in regard to thyself and thy labours so highly favourable. The iron is beginning to melt.'

Again, in the first letter Whittier wrote to him after his return to England, dated 'Amesbury, Aug. 29, 1841,' he says :—

'My dear Friend,—It seems, indeed, a long time since we parted with each other on board the steamship at Boston, and I hope and trust that long ere this thou hast been

restored to the society of thy friends on the other side of the water. I almost felt alone on parting with thee, especially when I looked around on our own Society, and saw coldness and ill-disguised opposition so generally apparent. But I am more and more assured that thy coming was in the way of truth and duty, and that its fruits will be made manifest ere long, even in our Society. Thy letter [to Friends] has been pretty generally circulated, and, as far as I can learn, has been received by all candid minds with satisfaction. Some, indeed, are opposed to it, and speak harshly, but the majority keep an "expressive silence." . . . Yesterday I received a letter from an active and influential Friend in New Hampshire. He says "Joseph Sturge's letter is admirable—gentle, yet pointed, and baptized in a workmanlike spirit. We think of having a thousand copies printed in a pamphlet form."'

Two or three months later, he writes again :—

'Thy letter to Friends is doing quietly a good work. Some of our *hardest* have been softened by it. A member of Dover N. H. quarterly meeting, a magistrate and a man of some note in other societies as well as ours, who has been bitterly and actively hostile to us, has read thy letter, and says he cannot but unite with it, and that its doctrines and advice are sound. . . . . The first-fruits of thy labours in Philadelphia begin to appear. Thomas Evans writes me under date of the 23rd thus:—"In the Meeting for Sufferings I have not been inactive, and a committee is now under appointment to procure information respecting slavery and the slave-trade in the State of Delaware, with a view of presenting at its next session a memorial against these crying sins." Now is not this encouraging? He speaks of thee with much affection. "Joseph's visit," he says, "was a very pleasant one to me." The conclusion of his letter is so beautiful and characteristic that I cannot forbear copying it: —"Amidst all the darkness which has covered our horizon on the awful subject of the negro's wrongs, I feel a settled conviction that a brighter day has already begun to dawn. The grey twilight of the morning is indeed faint, but it is the harbinger of the meridian day. Let

us not, then, be discouraged, but labour on with the meekness and wisdom, yet with the holy firmness inspired by the spirit of the Gospel.'

On January 31, 1842, Mr. Whittier writes again :—

'I send thee the "New York Herald" of last week, containing the debate in Congress on the presentation of a petition from some persons advising a peaceful dissolution of the Union. This was taking the blustering Southerners at their word, as they have all along been threatening to dissolve the Union. . . . Thou wilt see that thy name is pretty freely used in the debate. Lord Morpeth was present during the discussion.'

His own modest estimate of the effects of his visit may be seen by the following extract from a letter which he wrote to his friend, Mr. Thomas Harvey, immediately on his arrival in England :—

'My dear Friend,—Thou wilt be pleased to hear that I arrived safe at Liverpool after a quick passage by the Caledonia steamer, viâ Boston and Halifax. I have to apologise to thee for not answering, as I intended, thy kind letter, but I found my time so very closely occupied while in America, that I was obliged to give up writing all letters but what appeared absolutely needful. I can hardly tell if my visit has been of any service to our cause, but if I may measure its value either by the abuse of the pro-slavery press there, or by the alarm and uneasiness of some Friends who are opposed to all abolition action in our Society, I may hope some little good will result. About the most I have reason to hope for is, perhaps, that the members of our Society, who wish individually to act, will have less obstruction thrown in their way; and I trust, also, the sincere abolitionists will in future waste less of their strength in complaining of each other. There is much to encourage in reference to the cause in America. In the Northern States it is evidently making much progress, notwithstanding that the organised Anti-slavery effort has been so long paralysed. . . .

'Very sincerely and affectionately thy friend,

'Joseph Sturge.'

Among the papers which Mr. Lewis Tappan kindly sent for the use of the biographer, there are several containing records of liberal donations which Mr. Sturge made towards the Anti-slavery cause while in America, the last of which was the following, written on the eve of his embarkation for England, and left as a parting legacy in the hands of his friend :—

'Joseph Sturge places at the disposal of his friend Lewis Tappan the sum of 1,000 dollars, or any portion thereof for the promotion of Anti-slavery objects, provided that Lewis Tappan draws for the same as he may require it, any time within twelve-months of the date hereof.

'Joseph Sturge.

'New York : 7th month, 22nd, 1841.

To another of these documents, containing instructions for the distribution of several large sums, are attached the following words : 'The gifts to be paid with the express condition that they be acknowledged as from "A Friend," and not in Joseph Sturge's name.' But surely we may hold that death has now repealed this modest interdict, and left us at liberty to avail ourselves of this chance revelation of one among a multitude of such generous benefactions which ran along the whole line of his life, in which, while his hand was 'open as day to melting charity,' he was careful not to let his left hand know what his right hand did.

In his letters to his sister, from which we have quoted, Mr. Sturge refers to a visit he paid to Dr. Channing. There was much to attract these two strongly to each other ; the same simplicity of character, the same tenderness of heart, the same sense of the sacred responsibilities of life, and the same warm interest in the condition of the humble and down-trodden. The hour that they spent together seems to have been one of

earnest and solemn communion, consecrated by the word of God and prayer. We must own that the image of the Evangelical Quaker and the Unitarian minister, rising above all distinctions of theological creed, while their souls mingled in prayer on behalf of those that are desolate and oppressed, is one on which we love to dwell. It seems to have deeply impressed Mr. Whittier, who was present, for he has commemorated this interview in a beautiful poem on the death of Dr. Channing, from which we quote a few stanzas:

'By Narragansett's sunny bay,
Beneath his green embowering wood,
To me it seems but yesterday
Since at his side I stood.

The slopes lay green with summer rains,
The western wind blew fresh and free,
And glimmered down the orchard lanes
The white surf of the sea.

With us was one who, calm and true,
Life's highest purpose understood;
And, like his blessed Master, knew
The joy of doing good.

Unlearned, unknown to lettered fame,
Yet on the lips of England's poor,
And toiling millions, dwelt his name
With blessings evermore.

Unknown to power or place, yet where
The sun looks o'er the Carib sea
It blended with the freeman's prayer
A song of jubilee.

. . . . . .

No bars of sect or clime were felt—
The Babel strife of tongues had ceased—
And at one common altar knelt
The Quaker and the Priest.

And not in vain; with strength renewed,
And zeal refreshed, and hope less dim,
For that brief meeting, each pursued
The path allotted him.'

CHAPTER XII.

SUNDAY TRAVELLING. RIOTS IN BIRMINGHAM.

Mr. Sturge becomes a Director of the London and Birmingham Railway—The Question of Sunday Travelling—Friends' View of the Sabbath—His Reasons for objecting to running Trains on that Day—Injustice to the Company's Servants—Injurious Moral Effect—Submits a Motion to the Board—Then appeals to the Proprietors—His Speech on that Occasion—Is defeated and retires from the Direction—Is chosen an Alderman of Birmingham—Refuses to subscribe the Declaration—Disturbed State of the Town—The Meeting at the Bull Ring—'The National Convention'—The London Police brought down—Collision with the People—Angry Excitement—'The National Holiday'—Riot—Mr. Sturge saves some of the Rioters from Execution—Moves a Committee to enquire into the Causes of the Riot—Its Report—Peculiar Civic Government of Birmingham at the Time—Government Measure of Police—Its despotic Provisions—Mr. Sturge opposes it—Exciting public Meeting—His Influence in calming the People—His Speech on that Occasion—Is severely censured—His Defence of his own Conduct—Extracts from his Letters.

In order not to interrupt the narrative of Mr. Sturge's labours in the anti-slavery cause, we have omitted to refer, at the precise time of their occurrence, to his activities in connection with some other matters to which we must now return.

The reader will probably remember, that in the touching memorandum, previously cited, which Mr. Sturge wrote, as it were, over the grave of his deceased wife, one of the duties which he conceived to devolve upon him, as he returned from the seclusion of his sorrows to the practical activities of life, was the prevention, so far as that lay in his power, of Sunday travel-

ling on the London and Birmingham Railway. We have now briefly to explain the views he entertained on that subject, and the steps he took for carrying them into effect. When the London and Birmingham Railway Company was formed, Mr. Sturge was chosen as one of the directors soon after the commencement of the undertaking. In such a position, it was not possible that a question of so much importance as that of Sunday travelling should fail to engage the early attention of one who sought to guide himself in whatever business he was concerned in by the law of conscience. And when he was led to the conclusion that such a use of the Company's means of locomotion was not right, no considerations of interest, or of the obloquy to which he should be exposed by adopting such a course, could deter him from endeavouring to give a practical effect to his convictions. It must be remarked, however, that he did not oppose Sunday travelling on what are called high Sabbatarian views. It is well known that the Society of Friends do not acknowledge the perpetual obligation of the Jewish Sabbath, nor do they recognise any special sanctity, as attaching to particular days, under the Christian dispensation. But they do very earnestly maintain the duty of setting apart some portion of our time for religious purposes, 'and as there is no sanctity in any day, and no obligation to appropriate one day rather than another, that which is actually fixed upon is the best and the right one.' * These views, of course, entirely preclude the idea of enforcing Sunday observance by legislation, or of claiming any divine right for urging abstinence from labour on that day. But though Mr. Sturge distinctly disclaimed taking these grounds, there were other reasons

* *Tymond's Essays*, p. 106.

sufficient in his opinion to justify the attempts he made to prevent the great Company to which he belonged from using their power and example to promote Sunday traffic. In the first place, it would necessitate the employment of a large number of persons, who would be thereby deprived of their day of rest, of the means of Christian worship and instruction, and of the opportunities which working men can have only on Sundays of enjoying intercourse with their families, and of promoting the religious education of their children. He, further, felt the greatest repugnance to imposing upon persons employed by the Company, who might have religious scruples against working on Sunday, and who were likely, certainly, not to be the least valuable and trustworthy servants, the alternative of violating their conscience, or of relinquishing their occupation. And, finally, he attached great value to the moral effect on the character and habits of the people of a day of rest and religious observance, and strongly deprecated whatever had a tendency to break down so salutary a custom. Such being his convictions, so soon as the first portion of the line was about to be opened in 1836, he proposed to his brother directors, 'that the Company's engines and carriages be not used on a Sunday, during the partial opening of the railway.' This motion was lost by a majority of one, as was a second motion of similar purport submitted to the same body, about a year later. The division of sentiment being thus so nearly equal among the directors, it was deemed necessary to refer the question to the suffrages of the proprietors. This was done on June 30, 1837, when Mr. Sturge moved a resolution to the same effect as the one above cited. He was sustained by upwards of 1,500 votes; but a still larger

number voted in favour of an amendment for only 'partially closing the railway on a Sunday, with a view of preventing travelling during the hours of divine service.' Nothing could have been more temperate and charitable than the spirit in which Mr. Sturge brought forward his proposal. This, however, did not save him from being bitterly assailed by a portion of the public press. Much is said about religious intolerance, but there is such a thing as irreligious intolerance, which can show itself, to say the least, quite as fierce and fanatical, and as incapable of making any candid allowance for the judgment and conscience of others. Mr. Sturge, however, was not a man to be deterred by this kind of reproach from persevering in a course which he conceived to be right in principle and conducive to the general good. When, therefore, a sufficient time had been allowed for testing the experiment of partial restriction on Sunday travelling adopted by the proprietors, he determined to give them an opportunity of reconsidering their decision. It was found, of course, that the system of partial restriction did not remove, and hardly even mitigated, the evils on which his objections were founded. Accordingly, on March 8, 1838, he once more brought the question before the proprietors at a general meeting, and asked them to consent to, at least, an experiment of nine or ten months of the principle for which he contended. A few extracts from the speech he delivered on that occasion will suffice to show the ground on which and the spirit in which he advocated this measure:—

'He said he felt it due to himself to state the views and convictions on which he brought the subject before the meeting. He was no advocate for legislative enactments on

this subject; and if he legislated at all, he would legislate as strictly for the rich as for the poor. But this was a very different question; it was whether a great trading company should employ their servants and carry on their business on Sundays.'

Having adverted at some length to 'the two main considerations' that had been brought forward by those who opposed him, 'the one of profit, and the other of necessity,' he proceeds to consider the hardship inflicted upon those in the employment of the Company, by their being obliged to work on the Sunday without regard to their conscience or convenience, in support of which he read extracts from memorials, four or five of which had just been presented to the board of directors by the clerks, porters, policemen, &c., employed on the different stations. He then adds:—

'It was, however, upon the moral and religious view of the question alone that he had been induced to trouble the proprietors with the present motion. It was well known that even the habit of putting on a clean dress once a week had a good moral effect on the working classes; but partial employment on the Sunday was found frequently not only to prevent this, but also the attendance on a place of worship. It should be recollected, moreover, that among the working classes Sunday was the great day for the education of their children; and the example of a parent leaving his house to attend to every-day employment must have a most injurious effect on his children. Indeed, he attached so much importance to the observance of the Sabbath, that he considered the moral elevation of this country in a great measure depended upon it; and the example of such a Company as this, either for good or evil, must be very powerful. All that he asked in the present motion was to throw the *onus probandi* on the public as to the necessity of throwing open the railway for their use on that day. The present being the most favourable moment for trying the experiment, he was most

desirous that such an opportunity should not be missed, as he felt that the proposition of those who advocated a partial opening of the railway on the Sabbath was not only unsound in principle, but unsatisfactory and impracticable in any attempt to carry it into effect. Before he sat down, he might perhaps be permitted to observe that, on a former occasion, when this question was discussed in London, something of an angry feeling was exhibited by those who opposed his views, though he could scarcely see on what ground; but in discussing this question, while he claimed the exercise of the right of private judgment in coming forward in the present instance from a sense of duty, he trusted he had done so with perfect charity towards those who differed from him in opinion, and with an entire feeling of goodwill.'

The result of the motion was, after a scrutiny of votes, that while 3,621 voted for it, 7,486 voted against it. This division being, of course, perfectly conclusive as to the judgment of the proprietors, Mr. Sturge felt that he had no right further to press his opinions upon them; and as he could not with a free conscience, to quote his words in his letter of resignation, 'be the representative of a body who had decided upon a course which he conceived to involve an incalculable extent of moral evil, he retired from the board with a full acknowledgment of the courtesy he had experienced, even from those directors whose opinions had differed from his own.'

When Birmingham received its charter of incorporation under the Municipal Act of 1835, the eyes of his fellow-citizens were soon turned to Mr. Sturge as a fitting person to represent them in the town council, and to aid in the administration of their local affairs. At the close of the year 1838, without any solicitation on his own part, and during his absence from town, he was elected as alderman of Thomas's Ward. This appoint-

ment placed him in a position of some perplexity, for while unwilling to decline the trust committed to him by the spontaneous votes of his neighbours, there were certain declarations exacted of those who should serve on the council which he could not conscientiously take. Not merely as a member of the Society of Friends, but from strong personal conviction, he was opposed to church establishments; and although he held that, as he did all his other opinions, with perfect charity towards those who differed from him, yet he held it also with unwavering firmness and decision. When, therefore, he was required, as a test of admission to municipal office, to profess his determination not to use any power that might thus fall into his hands to the disadvantage of the Protestant church, *as established by law*, he felt he could not do this without some compromise of principle. To save his own consistency, therefore, and at the same time, no doubt, to signify by a practical protest that he disapproved the imposition of such a sectarian test as a barrier in the way of any class of the community to the full enjoyment of the rights of free citizenship, he resolved, whatever the legal consequences to himself might be, to accept the nomination of his fellow-townsmen, and to act in the office to which they had designated him without subscribing the declaration in question. His reasons for so acting were stated in the following address:—

'To the Burgesses of Thomas's Ward.

'Although not insensible to your kindness in choosing me to represent you in the town council, I may acknowledge I hold the opinion that when the duty is faithfully performed, the *electors*, not the *elected*, are the obliged party; and I would rather prove by my actions than professions that I deserve your confidence. I could not satisfactorily have undertaken

the office, unless placed there by your *unbiassed* votes; therefore I was not sorry that another engagement occasioned my absence from town on the morning of the election. On hearing of my nomination I publicly stated I could not subscribe to one of the declarations required on taking office; and as I have acted upon this resolution, I consider it my duty briefly to explain why I have pursued this course. The following are the usual declarations:—

'"I, A. B., having been elected (alderman or councillor, as the case may be) for the borough of Birmingham, do hereby declare I take the office upon myself, and will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties thereof, according to the best of my ability."

'"I, A. B., do solemnly and seriously, in the presence of God, profess, testify, and declare, upon the true faith of a Christian, that I will never exercise any power, authority, or influence which I may possess by virtue of the office of (councillor or alderman, as the case may be), to injure or weaken the Protestant Church, as it is by law established, in England, or to disturb the said Church, or the bishops and clergy of the said Church, in the possession of any rights or privileges to which such Church, or the said bishops and clergy, are or may be by law entitled."

'The former declaration I have taken, but I have concluded to act without subscribing to the latter, which I consider a recognition of the rights of church establishments; these I believe to be opposed to the spirit of the Gospel dispensation, and although I may not have to support the opinion, *as an alderman*, I deem it unsafe to draw a distinction between my actions as a private individual, and those I perform in virtue of any office I hold.

'I am, very respectfully,

'Joseph Sturge.

'Edgbaston: 1st month, 1st, 1839.'

Soon after his acceptance of this office, painful events occurred at Birmingham which obliged Mr. Sturge, according to his own conviction of duty, to take an active part in defence of what he deemed the violated

rights of his fellow-citizens. There was a good deal of distress in the manufacturing districts about the period in question. This led to much political agitation among the working classes. In Birmingham they were accustomed to meet to discuss their rights and grievances at a place called the 'Bull Ring,' an open space in the centre of the town, a portion of which is occupied by St. Martin's church. The demands of the people, as interpreted by the class of extreme reformers then very active in the country, had been embodied in an instrument well known as 'The National Petition.' Those who advocated the claims put forward in this document were divided into two parties, one of which favoured, and the other repudiated, a resort to physical force as a means of acquiring their political rights. The former party was represented by a body called the National Convention, at the head of which was Mr. Feargus O'Connor. In May 1839, this body transferred its sittings from London to Birmingham, which of course gave a new impulse to the agitation already existing. The magistrates, alarmed by the violent and menacing language employed by some of the speakers at the Bull Ring meetings, had already, previous to the arrival of the convention in the town, issued more than one warning, commanding persons to refrain from attending such meetings. Finding that this did not produce the desired effect, and apprehending that the presence of the delegates to the convention would probably embolden those who were disposed to follow violent counsels, they had, by anticipation, strengthened the military force, and also sworn in a large body of special constables. Not satisfied, however, with these precautions, some of them, in an evil hour, solicited and obtained the aid of a body of the London police, which

came down to Birmingham on July 4, 1839. On that very evening these men were marched to the Bull Ring while the meeting was being held, and although there was, on that occasion, no appearance of disorderliness nor any inflammatory speeches delivered, they made a rush on the people, who, at the first onset, fled in all directions, and were pursued by the police. The latter appear to have made very free use of their staves, even before any show of resistance was offered to them in performance of their duty. As, however, in the impetuosity of their pursuit, they became widely dispersed, the populace were gradually emboldened to resent the violence that had been used against them. They began to rally in groups, and to throw stones and brickbats at their assailants, who were in turn seized with a panic, and fled precipitately for refuge within the gates of the Public Office. But they did not gain this shelter until some of them had been severely wounded. This unfortunate collision greatly exasperated both parties. The London police, in particular, in their eagerness to avenge their defeat and maltreatment, seem to have acted as though something like martial law were in force—all civil rights utterly at an end—and the persons, and almost the lives of the working people of the town, placed at their mercy. Decent, orderly mechanics, whilst walking the streets on their lawful business, were rudely ordered to 'move on;' some were violently pushed forward, or received blows to quicken their pace; others were knocked down, and not a few were severely beaten while on the ground. Even their own firesides afforded them no security; outer doors were forced, and houses entered, without any lawful authority.* The feelings of the working classes were

* Report of the Committee appointed by the Town Council.

greatly embittered by these indignities and outrages inflicted upon them by a body of strangers, brought from a distance, as it appeared to them, to overawe and insult them at their own doors. July 15th was the day appointed by the extreme popular party for observing what they called their 'national holiday,' when the people were simultaneously and everywhere to desist from labour. On that day considerable numbers of working men assembled in various parts of Birmingham. They did so with no deliberate purpose of violence. But there can be little doubt that resentment against the London police was smouldering fiercely in their bosoms. This was fanned into a flame by certain additional acts of aggression committed by the same body on the day in question. The populace, at first, restricted themselves to tearing down the wooden pales of some gardens, and converting the fragments into weapons. But, as is almost invariably the case in such popular demonstrations, when the mischief was once let loose it passed out of the control of those with whom it originated, and who probably meant to keep it within bounds, and was eagerly seized upon by a mob of boys, and thieves, and ragamuffins, who always prowl about the streets of large towns, and converted to mere purposes of riot and plunder. Windows were smashed, shops were burst open, a bonfire was kindled, and finally two dwelling-houses were burnt to the ground. The rioters were, however, soon dispersed, several were captured, brought to trial, found guilty, and left for execution. Mr. Sturge had frequently, during this period of excitement in the town, personally interposed to calm the agitation of the multitude, by appearing in their meetings and earnestly entreating them to beware of following the counsels of those who

would incite them to violence. The respect felt for his character, and the confidence reposed in the sincerity of his sympathies for the working men, enabled him to exercise a most salutary influence on this class of his fellow-citizens, and did much, it is believed, to mitigate the evil he could not wholly prevent. When the crisis was over, his first efforts were directed to save the lives of the unfortunate men who were condemned to die for their share in the riot. By indefatigable exertions, he succeeded in getting their sentence commuted to transportation. His attention was next turned to the causes of the late disturbances. He had a strong conviction that the people were not wholly to blame for the unhappy events which had brought so much danger and dishonour on the town. He moved, therefore, the appointment of a committee by the town council to investigate the causes of the riot. He was elected chairman of this committee, which, after an elaborate enquiry, presented an able report to the council, in which they declared explicitly their belief that the disorders, which all so much deplored, were owing partly, no doubt, to the inflammatory language which about that time was addressed from platform and press to the working classes, but also in a very main degree to the misconduct of the London police. They, further, severely censured the magistrates for having made the services of these men the subject of complimentary notice.

But the riots at Birmingham led to action on the part of the Government, to which Mr. Sturge felt himself called upon to offer the most strenuous resistance. At the time to which we are now referring, the local government of the town seemed to have been in a state of transition between the old and new system of municipal

law. First, there were the ancient Headborough and manorial constables, quite unsuited to the modern wants of a great town. Afterwards, these were associated with, but not governed by, commissioners appointed by act of parliament, whose duties related to the streets, and markets, and town hall. Then came the charter of incorporation, and the grant of a borough commission of the peace. Under these royal grants there were a borough council and a set of local magistrates added to the previous local authorities. It may be readily imagined how much confusion arose from such a variety of governing and administrative bodies, with occasional conflicts of function between them.

The Birmingham riots of 1839 were, no doubt, partially traceable to these causes, for on that occasion the London police were brought down by invitation from the magistrates, when, if the town council had been consulted, the probability is they would not have been sent for.

After the riots, the Government brought forward a bill in parliament for vesting in the town council power to levy a rate and constitute an efficient police force. But suddenly, and without cause assigned, this bill was withdrawn and a new one substituted, putting the entire control of the force into the hands of a commissioner, to be appointed by the Home Secretary of State. This measure, sufficiently objectionable in itself, was rendered still more so by the way in which it was smuggled through parliament at the close of the session, and by what was something very like an underhand trick, involving a violation of good faith and honourable understanding. No man had a more thorough aversion than Mr. Sturge to any encroachment on the liberty of the subject, or to any approach to the

assumption of despotic power on the part of the Government. When, therefore, he became aware of the provisions of this Act, he threw himself into opposition to it with all the ardour and energy of his nature, and all the more because he found some others, under the influence of the panic occasioned by the recent disturbances in the town, disposed to barter their local rights for a temporary sense of security. A large public meeting was held at the town hall, consisting principally of working men. Most of those members of the middle classes who were wont to take the lead in political and municipal affairs carefully held aloof, and many persons indulged in dire forebodings that the meeting would end in tumult and riot. Some of Mr. Sturge's own friends earnestly besought him to abstain from taking any part in the proceedings. But he had the strongest conviction that to shrink from the side of the working men at such a moment, and to suffer an arbitrary measure to pass unchallenged because it might seem at the time to bear most hardly against *their* liberties, was not only ungenerous, but was the sure way to aggravate all the evils that were apprehended, by deepening the alienation already existing between them and the rest of their fellow-citizens. Mr. Sturge, therefore, not only attended the meeting, but, contrary to his wont, consented to take a conspicuous part in the arrangements by moving one of the principal resolutions. The good effects of his presence soon became apparent. When one of the working men stood forward to move an amendment relating to the franchise, which would have diverted attention from the question in hand and verified the prognostications of their opponents, Mr. Sturge interposed, and, in a few kind words, appealed to the good

sense of the audience not to give their enemies an occasion to triumph, which would certainly be the case if they were, by any side-wind, to frustrate the object of the meeting. He added, that if the working men wished to call a meeting for the franchise, and they had any difficulty to procure that hall, he would pay all expense and guarantee any damage that might be done. On this, the proposer and seconder withdrew their amendment, and the original resolution was carried without a dissentient voice.

To show the grounds on which Mr. Sturge acted on this occasion, we cannot do better than cite a few sentences from the speech he delivered at the town hall meeting. The Government Act he described as

'A measure by which the minister of the day placed within their town a large body of men, drilled and organised, under the control of a Commissioner appointed by him, and who also acted as a Justice of the Peace, with between forty and fifty officers of various grades below him. This force he could order to act without a moment's notice, with deadly weapons, without even reading the Riot Act, as in the case of the military. If they did not implicitly obey, the Secretary of State could at any moment supplant any of the body, from the lowest to the highest. The principles on which this despotic measure are based are so entirely repugnant to justice, sound policy, and the British constitution, that had it not been hurried through Parliament at the very close of the session, under the worst possible misrepresentations, and when the ministers and their dependents constituted the majority of the members in attendance, bad as was the present House of Commons, he could hardly believe that it could have escaped. . . . Contrary to the opinion entertained by some, although the entire control of the police was vested in some agent of the Government of the day, the whole of the expense was to be paid by a local tax upon the town.

. . . He knew there were so many alarmed at the present state of things that they were ready to give up a portion of their liberty for the sake of what they called security; but that security, it would be recollected, was to be procured by the introduction of an armed police, and the adoption of measures which alienated the feelings of the great mass of the working classes. They might suppress the expression of public opinion for a time, but they must be conscious that, without doing justice to the people, they were treading on a smothered volcano. He also knew there were some who considered that the few and the wealthy should govern the poor and the many; but he could not find in his Bible, either in the doctrine and example of Him whom all Christians professed to follow, a single passage to justify such an opinion or such a practice. It was the conviction of a Christian duty which had brought him there that day, and which told him that he should resist by all possible means such measures as the Government Police Bill. He felt that he would not be obeying the injunctions of his Divine Master, "to love his neighbour as himself," if he did not use any little influence which he might possess to prevent encroachments upon the liberties of his country, though they might not affect him personally; and it was also his duty to advocate the rights of the poorest individual in the community to all the religious, civil, and political privileges of the wealthiest in the land. Some might be disposed to blame him for promoting meetings such as the present at this time, but he so far differed from them that he firmly believed the public and constitutional expression of popular opinion at the present eventful period was their greatest—he had almost said their only—safety. The severe censure cast upon the middle orders of society for their want of sympathy with the working classes, at some of the numerous meetings which had been held, had produced an effect which both concerned and alarmed him; and whilst he would earnestly appeal to all of the former class to remove every such ground of complaint, he would warn his working friends against listening too readily to such representations.'

Without further pursuing the history of this agitation, suffice it to say, that after a rather obstinate resistance, public sentiment ultimately obliged the Government to give way, and to allow local control to come into operation in the management of the local police.

Mr. Sturge was not mistaken in the apprehension that he would be severely blamed for the part he acted on this occasion. It was natural enough, of course, that at such a moment of intense excitement the leaders and organs of political party should assail him with great vehemence. For a professed liberal to place himself in such broad opposition to the Whig, or, as it was still the fashion then to call it, the Reform Ministry, was an act of unpardonable disloyalty in the estimation of that class, then much more numerous than it is now, who cherished a sort of blind traditional allegiance to the Whig party. It is probable, however, that Mr. Sturge was very little disturbed by *their* censure. But there was another class whose disapproval he felt much more keenly. Among his own intimate personal friends, who loved and esteemed him most highly, there were some who felt great solicitude lest his moral and religious character should suffer damage, from his being drawn too much into the perilous vortex of politics. It was an unfounded apprehension so far as he was concerned, for his politics sprung so directly from his sense of Christian obligation, that they may be said to have formed part of his religion. In answer to a dear friend and relative, who had addressed him, apparently, in a tone of remonstrance and warning on this subject, he wrote as follows :—

'I am much obliged, my dear brother, for thy kind and friendly advice about the police affair, and not the less so because I cannot agree with thee in opinion. If we talked

the matter over together, there is probably one point of principle on which we might differ considerably. I believe thou art inclined increasingly to doubt the propriety of Christians taking any part in political matters; while I am rather increasingly of opinion that they are not only justified, but that when called upon by their fellow-citizens they are bound to do so, unless it interfere with other and paramount claims upon them, or unless the position in which it places them *necessarily* involves a compromise of religious principle. But granting that I was not wrong in accepting a seat in the corporation, I think I could show thee pretty strong reasons why it was my duty to pursue the course I have with regard to the Government Police Bill. I was perfectly aware that by doing so I should expose myself to a good deal of censure from many quarters, and especially from almost the whole of the Unitarian body, and those who have a strong political bias in favour of the present ministry. But in reviewing what I have done, while I am too conscious of my great weakness and many infirmities to suppose that I have in all cases, both in word and manner, adopted the best mode of conveying my sentiments, I can see no ground to believe that I have been acting contrary to my Christian duty in the general course I have pursued. It is not the first time on which I have felt that, in following that line of apprehended duty, I must be prepared, if needful, to sacrifice the approbation of some wise and good men; and all I would ask of those whom I love and esteem, and whose good opinion I would not needlessly forfeit, is that they would not be biassed by mere prejudiced or newspaper statements, but suspend their judgments till they really know the facts, so as to be able to understand the merits of the case. What has lately got into some of the papers reminds me strongly of the censures cast upon me by the colonial pro-slavery press during our late anti-slavery struggle. I am sorry to say that amongst some of the middle and higher class with us there is a feeling almost as bitter towards the working classes as there was towards the slave by the slaveowners. I am writing in great haste now, and feel that it would be quite

out of the question attempting to go fully into the subject; but I was not willing to omit writing a line to express a hope thou wouldst suspend thy opinion till thou had an opportunity of knowing the real facts, and at the same time to assure thee of my gratitude for thy kind and affectionate expressions of caution. I know the dangerous path in which I am treading, and in the midst of its difficulties and temptations it is, indeed, a comfort to know that thou and some others are watching over me for good, and that when you think it is needful, you will not withhold a word of faithful admonition and counsel.'

To the same friend he writes in another letter, dated '8 mo. 22, 1839:'—

'The difficulty for a true Christian to act consistently while engaged in political matters is no doubt very great. But this is not a sufficient ground for him to desert his post, if in the ordering of Providence he is placed in such a situation, so long, at least, as he can fill it without any compromise of religious principle. The other alternative leads to consequences which many who take it up do not, I believe, at first sight perceive; for I think that, if carried out consistently, it must lead to a withdrawal from all active exertions for the amelioration of the miseries of mankind, and appears to me to be at variance with that part of our Saviour's prayer for His disciples, "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." Indeed, it would leave the devil in undisputed possession of many things which vitally affect the prosperity of nations and the spiritual and temporal welfare of the whole human family; and I think it possible to carry on civil government without violating the spirit of the texts thou hast quoted.'

CHAPTER XIII

ANTI-CORN-LAW AGITATION. CHINA WAR.

Mr. Sturge very early a Free Trader—Letters from Mr. Villiers and Lord Brougham—Joins the League from its first Formation—Letters from Mr. J. B. Smith and Mr. Cobden—Attends the Free-Trade Conventions—Special Services to the Movement—Helped to give it a Moral and Religious Tone—And to ensure simple Adherence to Principle—Mr. Cobden's Appreciation of his Services in this respect—Letter from Mr. Cobden—Jealousy of any Departure from Principle—Difference with the Leaguers on the Sugar Question—Letter of Mr. O'Connell—*Jeu d'esprit* of Mr. Cobden—Mr. Sturge's own Views on the Subject—The China War—History of the Opium Traffic—Mr. Sturge's strong Abhorrence of it—His Appeal to the Public—Meeting at Freemasons' Hall—Later Exertions in the same Cause.

When Mr. Sturge was being trained up in his early youth to a farmer's life, he was also, no doubt, duly inoculated with those ideas on the necessity of protection which at that time so absolutely possessed the agricultural mind. His father, so far as he concerned himself at all in politics, was a strong Tory, and we have heard his son on more than one occasion, in reference to the very decided course in an opposite direction taken by himself and his brothers in after life, pleasantly wonder how the excellent man would have felt had he lived long enough to see what a set of uncompromising radicals he had bred. We have already seen how early Mr. Sturge had become a convert to the doctrines of free trade. Apart from what we may call a constitutional tendency of his mind towards liberal ideas on all subjects, his experience in the corn trade

had no doubt greatly contributed to the result. It is easy to see that laws such as then existed, which converted traffic in the prime necessary of human life into a species of gambling, must have been, both on moral and commercial grounds, utterly unacceptable to a man of his principles. We are prepared, therefore, to find that as soon as he was partially relieved from the paramount claims of the Anti-slavery cause by the abolition of the apprenticeship, he began more and more to turn his ear to the cry that was gradually rising from the heart of the nation against that system of restriction on the importation of the people's food which, as few knew better than himself, pressed so cruelly on the industry and energy of the country. There was a personal reason also that drew him towards this agitation. Mr. Villiers had been one of his most faithful associates in his struggle for the liberation of the slave. It was very natural, therefore, that he should be anxious to do all in his power to strengthen the hands of that gentleman in those assaults upon the corn laws which for some years he so gallantly sustained in the face of a hostile ministry and an unsympathising House of Commons. In a letter dated August 15, 1838, Mr. Villiers writes to him :—

'Before I left London I put a notice on the books to this effect, that I would call the attention of the House to the taxes that raised the price of food, contracted the commerce of the country, limited the demand for labour, lowered the profit upon capital, and yielded nothing to the revenue. I will take the earliest opportunity in the next session to bring the matter on with the view to a motion for the total repeal of such taxes, which I conceive to be imposed by the corn laws. I am determined to ask for nothing short of this, because they are in *principle* opposed to justice and sound

policy, and are yearly threatening this country with tremendous evils. I have upon more than one occasion stated in the House my determination to bring on the question of the corn laws at the earliest opportunity next session.

'Yours most truly,

'C. P. Villiers.'

It was, no doubt, with a view to support Mr. Villiers' motion that Mr. Sturge contemplated the public meeting at Birmingham, to which the following letter from Lord Brougham refers, dated 'Penrith, September 29, 1838.'

'Dear Joseph Sturge,—I heartily rejoice at your coming into the corn law controversy. I regard you as already a veteran, and a veteran who has gained a great victory; and I hereby constitute and appoint you my lieutenant-general against those equally vile and silly corn-laws. I am ready, of course, to do my duty, but I much doubt if my going to Birmingham would serve the cause so well as presiding at a *London* meeting, which I am quite ready to do, and had promised to do before getting your letter. One reason against Birmingham is that I have no connexion with the place; and I think it always a doubtful thing if any person should *itinerate* to agitate. When the people on the spot are prepared to take part of themselves, *they* should do it. No harm can come of this. The other is liable to much abuse; but if it is still deemed that I am wrong, I promise to reconsider it.

'Yours very sincerely,

'H. Brougham.'

When the first germ of that great association for the repeal of the corn laws sprung up, which afterwards, under the name of the 'League,' grew into such power and fame, Mr. Sturge was one of the earliest to attach himself to it. He was, no doubt, well disposed to do so of his own accord, and the leaders of that body, who

were men of eminent practical sagacity, were no less anxious to secure his adhesion. The high respect in which his character was held throughout the country, the *prestige* which at that time surrounded his name as the hero of an agitation, which had proved so recently and so signally successful, and the great experience he had acquired in evoking and directing popular opinion to the accomplishment of a given object, made those gentlemen fully sensible of the great advantage it would be to their cause to enlist such a man actively in their ranks. Accordingly we find that, almost from the first, he was in frequent communication with Mr. Cobden, Mr. J. B. Smith, Mr. Duncan Maclaren, and other prominent members of the League, who sought his counsel in all their movements, and relied greatly upon his cooperation, especially as respects the important district of which Birmingham was the centre.

The following extract of a letter from Mr. J. B. Smith, dated January 31, 1839, referring to the first meeting of delegates held in London, shows how intimately Mr. Sturge was associated with the movement, even at that early period. Its allusion to Sir R. Peel is rather remarkable, when we remember that it was made six years before the events which it seems almost prophetically to foreshadow actually took place:—

'I am rather uneasy that I have not heard from you respecting Brown's hotel. I should very much like to have an hour's conversation with you on my way to London. Perhaps you could meet us at the railway station in Birmingham, so that we may have a few words together. Our deputies go to-morrow for the purpose of seeing some of our friends and making preparations for the Monday meeting. We hear that ministers mean to propose a fixed duty and grant us a committee. This, we think, would be to

cushion the whole business, and we do not mean to submit to it. Nothing will do but total and immediate repeal, and if they are not prepared to grant that, then we ought in justice to be heard by witnesses at the bar of the House. We are determined to oppose every ministry who deny us repeal, and let no candidate show his face here again who does not vote for it. . . . Sir Robert Peel has a fine opportunity if he chooses to come out for total repeal; he would have all the manufacturing interests throwing up their caps for him, but what would the chaw-bacon Tories say to it? Would there not be a cry of "treachery again"? Hoping to see you on Monday,

'I remain,

'Truly yours,

'J. B. Smith.'

It is well known that Mr. Villiers' motion, made on the 18th February, proposing that the advocates of repeal should be heard at the bar of the House, was rejected by a large majority. Mr. Sturge, mindful of his own success on the Anti-slavery question by similar tactics, was anxious that the question should be brought forward again the same session in another form. To this proposal Mr. Cobden refers in a letter, dated May 30, 1839:—

'You suggest that we should try the question again. But how? Will the attention of the factions be called to the corn laws by any efforts of ours this session? I fear not. I wish you would see Mr. Villiers or else advise with some other judicious M.P., and ask them whether it would be advisable for us to try the question again in any shape this session. We fear it would not be possible to bring up our friends the delegates again this year in sufficient force to command attention to our case. But if we work up the towns by lectures, and send up a million of signatures against the corn laws next spring, we may bother even Sir Robert next session. Still if the discussion can be again

brought on, either directly or indirectly, this session, it might do good. I think the case of the Shetlands might in the right hands be made a powerful one to rouse the sympathies of the public.

'Yours very truly,

'R. Cobden.'

From this time forward, Mr. Sturge was for some years invariably present as the representative of Birmingham at those large meetings of delegates, constituting a sort of second and unofficial parliament, which were wont to assemble sometimes in London, and sometimes at Manchester, to promote the repeal of the corn laws.

But there were, we think, some special services which he rendered to the cause of free trade. In the first place, he helped to give something of a moral and religious tone to the movement, and to prevent it from degenerating into a mere commercial and economical agitation. Not that he was insensible to the immense importance of the subject in its bearing on the trading interests of the country. Still, it was the moral aspect of every question that appealed most strongly to his nature, and he seldom failed at the meetings of the League to keep before the eyes of his colleagues the fact, that the system against which they were contending was evil, not merely because it crippled our manufactures and interfered with the free course of commerce, but because it contravened the laws of God and strove, by perverse human legislation, to frustrate the beneficent designs of Providence. We find a characteristic illustration of this in the account given by Mr. Prentice, in his 'History of the League,' of the interview which a deputation from the delegates, who met in London in 1840, held with Mr. Baring, then Chancellor of the

Exchequer, and Mr. Labouchere, then President of the Board of Trade. After various speakers had shown how disastrously the corn laws were operating on the material prosperity of the country, as evidenced by the bitter and wide-spread sufferings of that terrible year, he adds that then 'Joseph Sturge made a powerful appeal to the ministers, placing the whole question upon the eternal principles of justice and humanity, which, he said, were shamefully outraged by a tax on the food of the people.' We believe that Mr. Sturge did another signal service to the cause of free trade during these early years of agitation. At one of the first meetings of delegates held in Manchester for the purpose of constituting the Anti-Corn-Law association, the question had to be discussed as to the principle or fundamental article of faith which should be adopted as the basis of union. Mr. Sturge strongly urged them to take, as the ground of their appeal to the country, nothing less than the total and immediate abolition of the corn laws.

'I remember,' says one of the leaders of the League, in a letter to the biographer, 'how little the great majority were prepared for anything so strong and uncompromising, and how gladly nine-tenths of us would have avoided the question at the time. But I believe that it was our late friend who, fresh from the experience of the Anti-slavery struggle, pointed out the necessity of taking our stand on the rock of abstract truth and justice; and I must say we found it our rock of safety during our seven years' struggle.'

Mr. Sturge seems to have ever after watched with jealous vigilance to keep the association true to its original pledge. In all large bodies like that into which the League gradually grew, there will always be found a class who shrink from the full and firm main-

tenance of a principle, and are for ever counselling surrender on some plea of compromise. There seems to have been a time in the history of the Anti-Corn-Law movement, when the influence of this class threatened to turn the body aside from the broad path of right to the entangling bye-ways of expediency. This was especially the case when a considerable Whig element got infused among them, who wished to subordinate what they saw was becoming a power in the country to the purposes of their own party. But from his experience in the Anti-slavery agitation, Mr. Sturge had learnt utterly to distrust such compromises as tending only to distract and bewilder the public mind, and to weaken by dividing the force of those who were demanding justice, while they left the root of the evil still in possession of the soil. He was determined therefore that, so far as he could prevent it, he would not permit his colleagues to swerve from the high ground which from the first he had persuaded them to assume. He thus became a sort of conscience to the League, taking alarm and giving warning at what he deemed the first sign of deflection from the right, and no doubt proving, as a sensitive conscience is very apt to do, rather troublesome and irritating in moments of strong temptation and of wavering virtue. The following letter from Mr. Cobden will show the importance he attached to Mr. Sturge's influence in this direction. In order to understand some of the allusions it contains we must premise that, when Mr. Sturge was on the point of paying a visit to America, he wrote to the Council of the League promising to double his subscription of 100*l.* a year, on the distinct understanding that they were on no account to yield up the principle of total and immediate abolition :—

'Manchester: February 20, 1841.

'MY DEAR STURGE,—When I got your favour of the 22nd of January, making the munificent offer of contributing 200*l.*, instead of 100*l.*, for the current year's agitation of the Anti-Corn-Law question, I wrote to you to beg you would address a letter to the "Circular" to that effect, and at the same time impress on the League the importance of cleaving to the TRUE principle of *immediate abolition*. I thought that such a letter from *you* would do much good, and I think so still. Indeed, it is now more than ever necessary that we should cling to our principle, when parties (I mean the two great political parties) are so nearly balanced that both are beginning to turn their eye towards us. The Whigs are trying to *use* the League; and there are so many of our supporters who are mere partisans that I am afraid they will break our ranks, unless such men as you should keep us together. A letter from you in the "Anti-Corn Law Circular," published at the present time, exhorting us to stand firm to principle, and promising your cooperation so long as we do so, would be a rallying-point for all the good and true men, and would shame the wanderers, and bring them back to our ranks.

'In your letter, received to-day, you surprise me by mentioning your project of a trip across the Atlantic. I should sincerely regret your absence from England at any time, but it would be a very great public loss if you were in America during the time of the meeting of Anti-Corn Law deputies this spring. Efforts will, I know, be made to bring prominently forward the view that the slave system of the United States is being indirectly propped up by our corn laws; and I think it possible that a couple of deputies from America will attend the meeting of our deputations. To lose you at such a time would be to throw away the good that must arise from the right direction of this new movement. I have had some correspondence with the editor of the "New York Emancipator," and he tells me the Anti-slavery party there are trying to raise funds to send two missionaries to England to lay before the public here the effects of our corn laws in

reference to the slave question in the United States. I see by the "Massachusetts Abolitionist," that a similar movement is going on in the New England States. Now this is a glorious field of operations for you. There are more human beings in bonds in North America than in all the rest of the *Christian* world, and we by our corn laws throw the entire power over the legislature there into the hands of the *slave-owners*. What a splendid theme this would make for O'Connell and Brougham in the Anti-Corn-Law debate, if you were in London to urge the subject on their attention at the meeting of deputies. Don't, I entreat you, turn your back upon us at such a crisis. By remaining over our meeting of deputies, you will help most effectually to strike the shackles from the slaves in America, and from our white slaves here at the same time.

'Yours very truly,

'R. Cobden.'

So jealous was Mr. Sturge of anything like even an appearance of vacillation on the question of principle to which he attached so much importance, that when, on his return from America, he found that the free-traders had not opposed but rather supported the proposal of the Whig Government for a fixed duty of eight shillings on wheat, he felt it right to address a letter publicly to Mr. Cobden, rather complaining of this course, and asking from him, 'who was so deservedly considered the leader and representative of the League in the House of Commons,' a renewed assurance 'that they neither have nor ever will relax from their efforts nor swerve from their purpose until they have obtained the complete removal of this disgraceful and cruel impost.' Mr. Cobden's explanation of the circumstances referred to, and his emphatic declaration that the council felt bound to adhere to the full principle of abolition, 'not less from a sense of duty than the con-

viction that it constituted their bond of union and the main source of their strength,' was entirely satisfactory to Mr. Sturge, and he resumed his place among the leaguers with his wonted earnestness and energy.

On one point, however, there was a wide divergence of opinion between him and the leaders of the League. Fidelity to the cause of the slave was with him paramount to all other obligations. When, therefore, the free-traders supported the measure introduced into parliament in 1841 for reducing the differential duty on slave-grown sugar, he differed from them wholly, and did not hesitate to proclaim and maintain his dissent with his usual boldness and tenacity.

It was no doubt a question sufficiently perplexing to those who were at once sincere Anti-slavery men and sincere free-traders, as was the case with many of those who joined in the controversy. It would be difficult, perhaps, to state the argument more forcibly on either side than is done in the following communications which Mr. Sturge received from two great masters of logic—Mr. O'Connell and Mr. Cobden. The former, as will be seen, adhered to the Anti-slavery view :—

'London : March 27, 1844.

'My dear Friend,—I entirely agree with you on the sugar question, not viewing it as a subject of political economy, but, under the circumstances of the case, taken altogether. When the British nation gave 20,000,000*l.* to the persons called owners of slaves, they did so for the sake of humanity, but in direct violation of all rules of political economy; and it would be, in my mind, the most absurd of all absurd things to give 20,000,000*l.* sterling to get rid in our own colonies of all the cruelties necessarily incident to slavery, and then immediately after to open our markets to slave-grown sugar of other countries, and thus to hold out a bonus to those

countries to continue and increase all the horrors of negro slavery. It is, to my mind, a one-sided, left-handed humanity to free the negro in our own colonies and then to augment his sufferings in other countries.

'It is said, "Will you be so cruel to the people of England as to refuse them cheap sugar?" I say, "Yes, I will, if the cheapness of the sugar is to be procured by shedding the blood of the negro." I would not consent to give it to the people of England, nor of Ireland either, at the expense of robbery or stealing, and I will not consent to give it to them by the murder of the negro. If the throat of the negro was to be cut at once in the process of augmenting the produce of sugar canes, everybody would call that murder, and it is no less murder to cut his back with the lash, and to work him to a premature death, which are the necessary consequences of the production of sugar by negro slave-labour.

'As you see how entirely I agree with you on this subject, command my services at any time and in any place you please.

'It is no answer to say, "that we use slave-grown tobacco and slave-grown cotton." My reply is, that I would prevent both if I possibly could. It is no reason at all that, because I cannot prevent two existing crimes, therefore I should consent to the commission of a third crime. Every law, human and divine, prohibits such conduct. I will prevent as much criminality as I can, and endeavour as much as possible to lessen that which I cannot prevent, leaving it in the hands of Providence to dispose the hearts of other men so as not anywhere to augment human misery.

'Believe me,

'Very faithfully yours,

'DANIEL O'CONNELL.'

Mr. Cobden, on the other hand, took the Free-trade views. Not that he differed from Mr. Sturge on the evils of slavery. In a letter written some years later, he says:—'You and I do not disagree in our abhorrence

of slavery, nor do I yield to any one in sympathy for the victims of that sin, but we do differ as to the course which we ought to take, *by legislation*, in this country to put down the slave trade.' At the height of the controversy on this subject, wishing to convey his sense of the inconsistency of the position taken by Mr. Sturge and his party, in a manner that should be at once forcible and as little offensive as possible to the friend whose character he so deeply honoured, he determined to clothe his logic in a garb of humour, and therefore sent him the following *jeu d'esprit* :—

'A Scene at the Board of Trade.

'*Lord Ripon and the Brazilian Ambassador sitting together.*

'Ambassador.—Your lordship is, doubtless, aware that the commercial treaty between England and Brazil is about to expire.

'Ripon.—True ; and I am happy to find myself empowered to treat with your excellency for a renewal of the commercial relations between two countries so admirably calculated by nature to minister to the wealth and happiness of each other.

'Ambassador.—Brazil is favoured beyond almost any other country in its soil, climate, and the facilities of its internal communication. Its products are various, comprising hides, tallow, cotton, gems of a variety of kind, sugar—

'Ripon.—I beg your excellency's pardon for interrupting you, but how is your sugar cultivated—by slave labour ?

'Ambassador.—It is.

'Ripon.—Oh ! strike it out of the list, I beg ; we cannot take slave sugar ; it is contrary to the religious principles of the British people to buy slave-grown sugar—*it is stolen goods.*

'Ambassador.—I bow to your nation's honourable scruples. We will then omit the sugar. Still there are other commodities remaining in which we may effect a profitable exchange, and I hope to the benefit of both countries.

'Ripon.—Oh yes, there are plenty of articles of exchange which we shall still be happy to supply you with,—our irons, earthenware, silks, woollens, cottons ——

'Ambassador.—I beg pardon—did your lordship say cottons?

'Ripon.—Yes; we are the largest dealers in cotton-goods in the world, and we sell them so cheap that they find their way more or less into every country on the face of the earth: we supply Italy——

'Ambassador.—I pray your lordship's pardon for again interrupting you, but may I ask how is the cotton cultivated; is it not by slave labour?

'Ripon.—Why—ahem! how is it cultivated, you say? Why—ahem! hem!—why——

'Ambassador.—I believe I can relieve your lordship from your apparent embarrassment by answering that question. At least four-fifths of the cotton imported into England is of slave cultivation.

'Ripon.—Ahem! I believe it is so.

'Ambassador.—Then am I to understand that your people have no religious scruple against selling slave-grown produce to the Brazilians?

'Ripon.—(Colours in his face, and moves about uneasily in his chair.)

'Ambassador.—No religious scruples against sending slave-grown cottons into every country in the world!—no religious scruples against eating slave-grown rice!—no religious scruples against making slave-grown tobacco!—no religious scruples against taking slave-grown snuff! (pointing to a gold snuff-box lying on the table.) Am I to understand that the religious scruples of the English people are confined to the article of sugar?

'Ripon (putting the snuff-box in his pocket).—I am sorry to be obliged to repeat that I cannot consent to take your sugar.

'Ambassador (rising from his seat).—My lord, I should be first to do homage to the sincere and consistent scruples of conscientious Christians. But whilst you are sending to Brazil sixty millions of yards of cotton goods in a year, I

cannot in justice to my own feelings sit quietly and listen to the plea that your nation has in reality any religious scruples upon the subject of slave labour. Excuse me if I suggest to your lordship that other reasons may be found, especially in the monopoly which your own colonial proprietors enjoy——

'Ripon—(interrupting him).—I do assure your excellency that a body of religious men, the anti-slavery party, have urged these scruples upon Her Majesty's Government. I have to-day been waited upon by Joseph Sturge, one of the most influential of that body——

'Ambassador.—Joseph Sturge! I have heard of him and his labours in the cause of humanity. He is the consistent friend of the oppressed,—too consistent, I should hope, to urge upon his government, whilst making a treaty with the Brazils for receiving slave-grown cotton from your country, to refuse slave-grown sugar in exchange. Joseph Sturge is a believer in the New Testament, which teaches us to "remove the beam from our own eye before we cast out the mote from our neighbour's eye." Does not Joseph Sturge oppose the introduction into this country of cotton, tobacco, and rice?

'(The door opens, and enter Joseph Sturge, with a cotton cravat, his hat lined with calico, his coat, &c. sewed with cotton thread, and his cotton pockets well lined with slave-wrought gold and silver. The Brazilian Ambassador and Lord Ripon burst into laughter.)'

We have no purpose here to re-argue this vexed question, in respect to which it is but right to say, some very earnest anti-slavery men did not concur in Mr. Sturge's views. It will suffice briefly to state in his own words the ground he took, and on which he believed he could reconcile his principles as a free-trader with the exceptional course he deemed it right to take on this particular question. In a letter to the 'Anti-slavery Reporter,' afterwards published separately, he says,—

'England has expended not less than twenty millions sterling in subsidies, armed cruisers, &c., to suppress the slave-trade; Spain, Portugal, and Brazil have entered into the most solemn compacts to abolish it; and yet at the present hour these countries are pursuing the horrid traffic to an extent that daily sacrifices to death or slavery one thousand victims. At the very time that our Government were proposing to raise an annual revenue of more than half a million sterling by the introduction of Brazilian and Cuban sugars, for the cultivation of which there would have been required an additional import from Africa of many thousand slaves annually, they were sending armed cruisers to seize as pirates the slavers engaged in supplying these victims. It has been asserted that to promote fiscal regulations to prevent the introduction of slave-grown produce, is inconsistent with the conviction that it is more costly than that of free labour; but in the luminous discussion in the Convention in London [in 1840] on the subject, it was conceded on all hands, that the slaveholder, by seizing upon the richest virgin soils, might for a time secure large profits by their cultivation, though with dreadful mortality to the human stock. To exclude from the country slave-grown sugar, is no more a denial of the undoubted superiority of free over slave labour, than the refusal of any other stolen goods that may be offered at a reduced price; for as slavery is robbery of the worst description, it is our duty to abstain from its fruits, both individually and nationally, irrespective of the cost of production. Our inconsistency in receiving cotton and some other articles, is no reason why laws already existing should be declared in favour of slave-grown sugar, and at a period when the arduous labours of half a century have resulted in the emancipation of our own colonies, and enabled us to obtain the unstained produce of freedom.

'Were this a mere question of commercial competition, I should feel perfectly satisfied to await the period when free labour would, under every disadvantage, assert its natural ascendency; but when the immolation of thousands of human beings must inevitably take place in the contest, I

feel bound to protest against the course it has been proposed to adopt. A pro-slavery writer has recently admitted that slaves in Cuba are worked to death at the rate of ten per cent. per annum, a destruction of life which, if extended to the whole human race, would soon depopulate the world.'

It is probable that this controversy, which lasted several years, tended somewhat to detach Mr. Sturge from his old free-trade associates, while the conviction that grew upon him, of the hopelessness of carrying any measures for the relief of the people without further organic reform, turned his attention more to the agitation for the suffrage, of which we shall presently have to speak more at large.

Before doing so, however, we must briefly notice one other effort put forth by him about this time in the field of philanthropy.

Towards the end of the year 1839, Mr. Sturge became deeply interested in the state of our relations with China. So far back as the year 1800, the Chinese Government had prohibited the importation of opium into the country, because, such were the words of the imperial edict, 'it was wasting the time and destroying the property of the people, and leading them to exchange their silver and commodities for the vile dirt brought in by the foreigners.' In spite of this, however, the East India Company continued the trade, and when its charter expired in 1834, private merchants pushed it with redoubled vigour, 'not only smuggling it in as our smugglers brought in brandy and gin, but making a lodgment in the country for the article, under shelter of the arrangements for the general trade at Macao and Canton.'* This contraband traffic, at length, was

* Miss Martineau's *History of the Thirty Years' Peace*, p. 484.

spreading to such an extent, was carried on with such open audacity, and was producing such disastrous effects on the health and character of the population, that the Government at Pekin was determined to put a stop to it. After repeated warnings, which were wholly unheeded, a special commissioner was sent to Canton with summary powers to deal with the question, who on his arrival blockaded the European factories, and demanded that all the opium on the coast should be delivered up to him to be destroyed. Captain Elliot, then chief superintendent of trade, had no alternative but to obey, and more than 20,000 chests of the prohibited article were surrendered to the Chinese authorities, when the blockade was immediately raised and the foreigners set free. The Government at home, in the instructions they had sent out to Captain Elliot, had laid down this clear principle, that 'Her Majesty's Government cannot interfere, for the purpose of enabling British subjects to violate the laws of the country to which they trade. Any loss, therefore, which such persons may suffer, in consequence of the more effectual execution of the Chinese laws on this subject, must be borne by the parties who have brought that loss on themselves by their own acts.' In spite of this declaraton, however, we went to war with the Chinese in defence of the opium smugglers, the best proof of which is afforded by the fact, that when the war was over we extorted from the Chinese Government 6,000,000 of dollars as compensation to the men whose daring 'violation of the laws of the country to which they traded' was the sole cause of the war. These transactions filled the mind of Joseph Sturge with the deepest sorrow and shame. The trade in opium, for which no defence ever has been or can be urged,

except that it is a *profitable* iniquity, always appeared to him hardly less infamous than the slave trade. And when he saw the strength and resources of this Christian country about to be employed in carrying fire and sword into the heart of a heathen empire, in support of so execrable a traffic, he was roused into a vehemence of indignation which led him to the employment of language such as he rarely permitted himself to use. He issued the following address on the subject:—

To the Christian Public of Great Britain.

'I may be accused of presumption in thus addressing you, but when the nation is about to be plunged into a disgraceful and expensive war, which must cast a reproach on the name of Christianity throughout the world, it becomes the duty of every individual, however humble, to raise his voice against it.

'It is now too notorious to render needful entering at large into the subject, that the guilty traffic in opium, grown by the East India Company to be smuggled into China, at length compelled the Chinese Government to vindicate the laws of the empire which prohibit its introduction, and to take decisive measures for the suppression of the traffic by the arrest of the parties concerned in it at Canton, and the seizure and destruction of the opium found in the Chinese waters.* It is also well known that the superintendent of British trade (Capt. Elliot) so far compromised his official character and duty as to take under his protection one of the most extensive opium smugglers, and thus rendered himself justly liable to the penalties to which they were obnoxious; and at the same time gave, as far as was in his power, the sanction of the British nation to this unrighteous violation of the Chinese laws.

'The following fact is, however, not so generally known. An individual now in this country, who had acquired immense wealth by this unlawful trade, has been in communication with the Government, and his advice, it is presumed, has in no

* See Thelwall's *Iniquities of the Opium Trade*, and King's *Opium Crisis*.

small degree influenced the measures they have adopted; though he is a *leading partner* in a firm to which a large proportion of the opium that was destroyed belonged; and at the very time he was claiming compensation, or urging a war with China, his house in India was sending *armed* vessels loaded with opium along the coast of China, and selling it in open defiance of the laws of that empire. This information, with the names of the vessels and the parties concerned, the number of chests of opium on board, the enormous profits they were realising, &c., was some time ago communicated to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on authority which he did not and could not dispute.

'It is possible that the Government, and even a majority of Parliament, may resolve to trample upon laws human and divine in slaughtering the peaceable inhabitants of China, and thus cast a deep stain upon the Christian profession which time will never efface. But you who claim *more* than a *name* to Christianity have a duty to perform. Remember that *your* property must contribute to defray the large expenditure* for the support of this war, in which a nation of upwards of *three hundred millions* of people, who have been at peace for ages, are now to be attacked and murdered by *Christian* Britain, because they endeavoured, in the most legitimate manner, to enforce their laws against Englishmen, who persisted in illegally introducing the most deadly poison into *their country*, by which the lives of tens of thousands of their people were annually destroyed.†

* 'It is well known that double pay has been given to some parties engaged in hastening and accompanying the armament to China, and that at our arsenals even the Sabbath has been employed to expedite the completion of the required instruments of destruction; and besides the addition to our taxation for the increase of the army and navy, the price of tea has advanced more than 1*s.* 3*d.* per lb., which, on the annual consumption of the kingdom, amounts to upwards of two and a half millions sterling, chiefly paid by the working classes.'

† 'The advocates of this war urge as a justification the conduct of the Chinese, to which they were driven by our violation of their laws; but every candid man will acknowledge the absurdity of this plea, even if their alleged facts were proved.'

'A wholesale carnage, which it is frightful to contemplate, has already begun,* and surely the disciples of the Prince of Peace cannot be held guiltless if they are silent on this occasion. Is it not the duty of everyone, of whatever religious denomination, solemnly to protest against such a war as this, although not prepared with me to condemn all war as forbidden under the Christian dispensation? and if our legislators treat their remonstrances with contempt or indifference, the people of China may hereafter learn that it was not the disciples of Him whose doctrines the missionaries have preached who were engaged in their destruction, but a party in power who, though *professing* the name, *possessed* not the spirit of Christianity.

'May the blessing of the Most High rest upon your efforts in opposing this iniquitous war, but should He in His inscrutable wisdom permit it to proceed, and should the blood of murdered nations hereafter be visited upon us in just retribution, may you possess the consoling reflection that these crimes and calamities of your country were evils you could not avert.

'I am, very respectfully,

'JOSEPH STURGE.

'Birmingham: 3rd month, 19th, 1840.'

Through his exertions, also, a large meeting was held at Freemasons' Hall, at which Earl Stanhope presided, when, in spite of a formidable and seemingly organised opposition, strong resolutions, condemnatory of the war, were carried. Unhappily, as is too often the case in this country, the China war, instead of being tried on its own merits and by the eternal principles of truth and morality, was converted into a battle-field for a great party fight, during which the question as to

* Several of the Chinese junks have been sunk by the cannon of the British ships, and about nine hundred of their people are said to have been either killed or drowned on this occasion.

the justice of our cause and the true honour of our country was subordinated to what, in the eyes of party politicians, was far more important, whether the Whigs or the Tories should enjoy the power and emolument of office.

The opium trade with China, which was the immediate occasion of this war, always lay as a heavy burden on the mind of Mr. Sturge. The spectacle of a Christian nation, purely for its own profit, forcing upon a heathen country, in defiance of its laws and against the earnest remonstrances of its Government, a pernicious and poisonous drug, which not only ruined the health but blighted the morals of the people to an appalling extent, was unspeakably distressing to him. Again and again did he lift up his voice in indignant protest against a policy so nefarious and dishonourable. Indeed some of the most strenuous efforts he made during the latter years of his life were directed to the revival of the Anti-Opium Society, in the hope that through its agency the public conscience might be roused to a sense of this great commercial iniquity. But the unscrupulous cupidity of trade has hitherto proved too strong for philanthropy and religion.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT.

State of the Country twenty Years ago — Great Depression and Suffering — Bad Feeling between the Middle and Working Classes — The latter in the hands of bad Advisers — Physical Force Chartists — Riots in the Manufacturing Districts — Panic and Prejudice of the Middle Classes — Mr. Sturge's deep Sorrow at this condition of things — The 'Nonconformist' Newspaper — Mr. Sturge's Qualifications to lead the Suffrage Movement — Letters from Mr. Cobden and Lord Brougham — His first Public Step in the Cause — Early Success of the Movement — Conference of Delegates at Birmingham — The Result — Mr. S. Crawford's Motion in Parliament — Nottingham Election — Mr. Sturge becomes a Candidate — His Speech at the Nomination — Mr. Walter is returned, but unseated on Petition — Extracts from Miss Sturge's Letters — Union of the Middle and Working Classes during the Election — Further Progress of the Suffrage Movement — Obstacles in the Way — Feargus O'Connor — His Character and Influence with the Working Classes — Another Conference at Birmingham — Mr. Sturge's Speech — Violent Debates — The two Parties fail to agree, and separate.

We are now coming to a portion of Mr. Sturge's life which at the time exposed him to a great deal of misconstruction and obloquy, and in respect to which there probably still exists considerable difference of opinion even among those who are equally his friends and admirers. We have already seen how distinct was his conviction that a Christian is not at liberty, on the plea of guarding his own piety from worldly taint, to evade the duties of citizenship. But to appreciate aright the active part he took in promoting that movement in favour of enlarging the suffrage, of which we are now

to speak, it is necessary that we should try to understand what were the social and political circumstances of the country twenty years ago.

It has been previously remarked that the pertinacity with which both the great political parties turned a deaf ear to the cry of the nation, often rising into a piercing wail of distress, for the repeal of those protective laws which were operating so disastrously on the commerce of the country and on the well-being of the masses, had obliged Mr. Sturge to look to an improved representation of the people as the only effectual means of obtaining the redress which had been so long demanded in vain from parliament as then constituted. In the letter previously referred to, which he wrote to Mr. Cobden on his return from America in 1841, he had said :—

> 'I have been driven to the conclusion, that it is not only hopeless to expect justice for the labouring population from the representatives of the present constituencies, but that the infatuated policy which now guides our rulers will be persisted in until they plunge millions into want and misery, if not bring them into a premature grave. I, therefore, think the time is arrived when every friend of humanity, of whatever class, sect, or party, should endeavour to obtain and secure for the people a just and permanent control over their own affairs.'

This may appear to us now to be strong language, but it was not stronger than was warranted by the state of things which prevailed at the time when it was written. Hundreds of thousands of the people already *were* 'plunged into want and misery.' 'The distress had now so deepened,' says Miss Martineau, referring to this period, 'in the manufacturing districts as to render it clearly inevitable that many must die, and a

multitude be lowered to a state of sickness and irritability from want of food; while there seemed no chance of any member of the manufacturing classes coming out of the struggle at last with a vestige of property wherewith to begin the world again.' *

We need not wonder, therefore, that men should turn away in despair from a House of Commons which, in the face of all this, clung with desperate tenacity to laws that were so largely contributing to produce this wide-spread misery and ruin. We shall, however, do Mr. Sturge and his associates in the suffrage movement great injustice if we imagine that their agitation had no broader principle for its foundation than a mere desire to effect a diversion in favour of the League. We must seek deeper than this for the motives by which they were actuated.

When the demand arose for parliamentary reform at the beginning of the reign of William IV., all classes—save only the class which up to that time had enjoyed all but a monopoly of political power—had joined in the agitation with a unanimity and enthusiasm rarely paralleled. No one doubts that the earnestness with which the working men throughout the country threw themselves into the movement had contributed greatly to the popular victory. They saw clearly enough that, under the provisions of the particular measure then proposed, they were almost wholly excluded from any share in the franchise. But they generously consented to postpone their own claims, confiding in the assurances of which the middle classes were then sufficiently lavish, that when they were admitted within the pale of the constitution they would take care to use their power

* *History of the Thirty Years' Peace*, vol. ii. p. 520.

to open the door for their countrymen who were yet left without. It was, however, soon discovered that after they had once gained possession of their own political rights, they concerned themselves but little for those who were still deprived of them. The working classes, therefore, became greatly embittered against the middle classes, as men are apt to be who deem themselves not only defrauded but duped. After having long waited in vain for some sign of practical sympathy from their former allies, they commenced an agitation on their own behalf, and embodied their demands in the document known by the name of 'The People's Charter.'

Such a misunderstanding between two sections of the community, who were connected together in so many important relations, was a serious misfortune. But between the years 1838 and 1842 circumstances arose, altogether apart from the original cause, which tended greatly to aggravate this alienation. There came a long period of severe commercial and industrial distress. A succession of bad harvests, combined with the operation of the corn laws, had raised articles of food to almost famine price. Throughout the manufacturing districts, there was such general stagnation of trade as reduced multitudes of the people to a state bordering on starvation. It was, surely, a very pardonable mistake if those who were suffering so severely, and whose education had been but very imperfectly cared for, were disposed to attach an exaggerated value to the possession of the franchise as a means of relieving their social distresses, the more especially as they could then very distinctly trace a large portion of their sufferings to bad legislation. Unhappily, also, the working classes fell into the hands of bad advisers, who, taking advantage

of their ignorance and credulity, laboured hard to breed bad blood between them and their employers, while at the same time they whispered in their ears that the only way to attain their rights and to avenge their wrongs was by the strong hand of violence. It must be pleaded, in extenuation of the readiness with which the people yielded to these sinister counsels, that most of the instruction they had ever derived from the example of their rulers was such as tended to glorify physical force in their estimation as the only guardian and vindicator of justice. Is it any wonder that those who have been taught by their own governments to regard the triumphs of the sword with unbounded worship as the principal glory of nations, should be sometimes tempted to ask, whether they could not turn the same instrumentality to account on their own behalf? Thus, predisposed by the whole tenour of opinion in the midst of which they had been brought up in favour of violence as a means both of redress and renown, the less intelligent of the working-classes unhappily gave too much heed to itinerant agitators who took advantage of their sufferings to 'pour into their ears the lep'rous distilment' of physical-force doctrines, by which, in many instances, they were incited to tumultuous and menacing demonstrations. Among the coal districts of Wales, among the nailers and miners of Dudley and Stourbridge, in the potteries of Staffordshire, as well as in the manufacturing towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire, there were riotous mobs who committed considerable depredations on property and spread great alarm through the country. These disorders, shared in by only a very small proportion of the distressed operatives, had filled the minds of many of the propertied and commercial classes with that kind of panic terror which so easily

glides into injustice, and had begotten in their hearts such bitter prejudices against the less favoured of their fellow-countrymen, as led them to repel with anger and insolence all their claims to equality of political privilege. In a letter to Mr. Lewis Tappan, Mr. Sturge says :—

'Our unenfranchised countrymen are *politically* much in the same position as your slaves, and in many of the electors there is nearly as strong a feeling against giving them the franchise as there is against giving it to the slave with you.'

This, certainly, was hardly an exaggeration of the feeling which widely prevailed, and to which expression was given in no measured terms by many of the journals of the day. The knowledge that such a feeling did prevail, reacted again most unhappily on the great masses of the people. Their hearts became hot with indignation. To avenge themselves of the wrong and insult inflicted on their class, there was the greatest danger of their throwing themselves more than ever into the arms of men who would gladly have used the opportunity to inspire them with hostility not only to the institutions of the country, but to the Christian faith itself, for there is no such efficient auxiliary to the infidel as a system of social and political injustice perpetuated under the apparent sanction of the Gospel.*

* It was at this same period that the late Dr. Arnold, under a deep sense of the social injustice which lay at the root of these disturbances, thus writes:—'It haunts me I might almost say night and day. It fills me with astonishment to see Anti-slavery and missionary Societies &c. busy with the ends of the earth, and yet all the worst evils of slavery and heathenism are existing among ourselves. But no man seems so gifted, or, to speak more properly, so endowed of God with the spirit of wisdom as to read this fearful riddle truly; which, most Sphinx-like, if not read truly, will most surely be the destruction of us all.

'My fear with regard to every remedy that involves any sacrifice to the

Mr. Sturge watched all this with the deepest sorrow and anxiety. He looked, of course, with unqualified abhorrence upon the attempts that were being made to seduce the industrious classes into asserting their political rights by an appeal to force. But his sense of justice no less revolted against the contemptuous tone in which many of the privileged sections of the community were wont to speak of them, and to deny them the possession of any rights at all. He thought it would be doing good service to both classes, if, by weaning the former from the dangerous theories which inspired so much distrust and dislike of their cause, he could induce the latter to listen in a more generous temper to the claims of so large a body of their fellow-countrymen. While he and others were anxiously reflecting on these things, an unexpected and very efficient auxiliary came to their aid. In the year 1841 the 'Nonconformist' newspaper was established, and immediately began to publish a series of masterly articles, in which, under the general title of 'Reconciliation between the Middle and Labouring Classes,' the thoughts

upper classes is, that the public mind is not yet enough aware of the magnitude of the evil to submit to them. "Knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?" was the question put to Pharaoh by his councillors; for unless he did know it they were aware he would not let Israel go from serving him.'

Writing to Mr. Justice Coleridge on Chartism — 'I would give anything to be able to arrange a society for drawing public attention to the state of the labouring classes throughout the kingdom. . . . . .

'It seems to me that people are not enough aware of the monstrous state of society, absolutely without a parallel in the history of the world — with a population poor, miserable and degraded in body and mind, as much as if they were slaves; and yet called freemen, and having a power as such of concerting and combining plans of risings which make them ten times more dangerous than slaves, and the hopes entertained by many of the effects to be wrought by new churches and schools while the social evils of their condition are left uncancelled—appear to me to be utterly wild.'—*Life of Arnold*, 2nd edition, 1844, pp. 133, 167, 178.

that had been vaguely revolving in many minds on this subject were embodied and expressed with singular clearness and power. Mr. Sturge hailed with great satisfaction the appearance in the field of politics of a writer who, combining a high tone of Christian sentiment with earnest sympathy with the people, was able to interpret what had long been his own views and wishes with a force of reasoning and a felicity of style to which he could make no pretensions. The articles referred to were republished in the form of a pamphlet, with a brief introduction from the pen of Mr. Sturge, and had an immense circulation among both sections of the community to whom they were addressed. In the few words which he prefixed to this publication, Mr. Sturge thus explains his own reasons for embarking in the agitation :—

'The Editor of the "Nonconformist London Weekly Newspaper," in which the following articles recently appeared, has given a general permission to reprint them. The principles are so ably stated, and the conclusions drawn from them are in themselves so just and equitable, that, without committing myself to the details, I earnestly commend them to the candid and impartial consideration of those who wish to be guided in their political as well as religious conduct by the precepts of the Gospel.

'It is a distinguishing and beautiful feature of Christianity, that it leads us to recognise every country as *our* country, and every man as *our* brother; and as there is no moral degradation so awful, no physical misery so great, as that inflicted by personal slavery, I have felt it my duty to labour for its universal extinction.

'Whilst thus engaged, it has sometimes been pressed upon me that the sufferings of my fellow-countrymen had a prior claim on my attention; and I freely acknowledge that the Patriot and the Christian fail in the discharge of their duty,

if they do not, by all peaceable and legitimate means, strive to remove the enormous evil of class legislation.

'I would therefore solemnly appeal to all, to consider if they may not, by timely exertion, avert yet greater calamities, and seriously to ask themselves whether they have not an individual responsibility which, if they remain indifferent spectators, will include them in the condemnation of him "who knoweth to do good, and doeth it not," for "to him it is sin."

'JOSEPH STURGE.'

It will become apparent enough as we proceed, that he entered upon this work under a solemn sense of responsibility. Nor can it be doubted that he was held by many to be in some respects singularly qualified for taking the lead in such an attempt to effect reconciliation between the middle and working classes. Mr. Cobden, though he would have preferred that his friend's energies had been directed to the same object from which he firmly refused himself to be drawn aside to any other agitation whatever, yet acknowledged that if any one could succeed in the end he had undertaken, it was Joseph Sturge. Speaking of the Declaration on the Suffrage to be signed by 'men out of doors,' that is not in Parliament, he says, in a letter dated Nov. 21, 1841 :—

'In such case *your* name is the very best in all England to head the list. I say this without compliment, or even views of doing you justice, but simply with an eye to policy. You have so much of established reputation to fall back upon that your standing with the middle class would not be endangered by a course which might peril the character and endanger the usefulness of most others. You would carry with you the philanthropists and the religious world, or at least neutralise their opposition, and without their aid no *moral* victory can be achieved in this age and country.'

The known benevolence of his life, and the stainless purity of his motives, contributed, moreover, to win recognition and respect for any movement with which he was associated from many who could not fully adopt his political programme. Thus, Lord Brougham says, writing to him in reference to a petition which at his request he had presented to the House of Lords—and the letter is further valuable for its generous tribute to the character of the working classes—

'Grafton Street: May 5, 1842.

'Dear Joseph Sturge,—In presenting the Union Petition, I told the particulars of the Birmingham Meeting, and expressed my hope that those who could not agree in its prayer, and differed even more widely than I did from the opinions set forth, would, at least, receive it with the respect due to the vast number of worthy and useful men holding the same opinions with the petitioners.

'I am quite certain that in expressing my deep sense of the merits of the working classes, both in parliament and at the late meeting on the Birckbeck testimonial, I rather underrated than exaggerated them. No one who has so long known the working classes can entertain a doubt of their honest and peaceable disposition. Truly it is to them that the prosperity of the country is mainly owing, and unhappily, when evil times come, the pressure must always fall heaviest upon them. Yet we see them generally submitting to their hard lot with a patience and even cheerfulness which can never be sufficiently admired. Surely nothing can give them a greater claim on our confidence; and though men may differ as to the steps by which, and the time at which, those classes should be admitted within the pale of the constitution, yet all must agree in looking forward to this consummation as the object which reformers should keep steadily in view.—Believe me,

'Truly yours,

'H. Brougham.'

The first public step taken by Mr. Sturge to give

effect to his views was at a meeting of Anti-Corn-Law deputies, assembled at Manchester on Wednesday, November 17, 1841. At the close of the business for which the meeting was specially convened, he invited any of the deputies who might feel an interest in the question of organic reform to a separate conference on that subject before they left the town.

'It was a strong proof of sympathy with the people,' says Mr. Prentice, 'and of respect for Mr. Sturge, that the meeting was attended by nearly all the deputies who had been present till the conclusion of the delegate meeting. . . . Mr. Sturge stated his strong conviction of the necessity of a radical reform . . . and that there were no other effectual means to secure the country from the mischiefs of class legislation. A conversation ensued, in which it was apparent that there was a great desire to promote a movement of thorough reform, provided it could be kept distinct from the operations of the League.'

Ultimately a resolution was passed requesting Joseph Sturge and W. Sharman Crawford, M.P., to draw up a general declaration, which, if approved, might be signed by the deputies, and then published, accompanied with an invitation for the signature of other friends of reform. About the middle of December the following declaration was accordingly put forth :—

'Deeply impressed with the conviction of the evils arising from class legislation, and of the sufferings thereby inflicted upon our industrious fellow-subjects, the undersigned affirm that a large majority of the people of this country are unjustly excluded from that fair, full, and free exercise of the elective franchise to which they are entitled by the great principle of Christian equity, and also by the British Constitution; for "no subject of England can be constrained to pay any aids or taxes, even for the defence of the realm or the

support of the government, but such as are imposed by his own consent or that of his representative in parliament."'—See Blackstone's *Commentaries*, vol. i. book i. chap. 1.

The conjuncture seemed favourable to the movement. Many of those who had been deeply interested in the question of commercial freedom, without having paid much heed to that of the suffrage, seeing how resolutely parliament turned aside their claim as respects the former, were driven in despair to look to the latter as the only alternative means of redress. At a convention of Anti-Corn-Law delegates at Edinburgh, at a banquet at Glasgow, and at the great Anti-Corn-Law Conference in London—all of them held at the beginning of 1842—ample opportunity was afforded of bringing the matter under the notice of a large number of the picked men of the middle classes. The two objects were never, indeed, mixed up together. The League, having been formed for a specific purpose in respect to which all the members were agreed, wisely declined to intermeddle, as a body, with any other subject. Nor was Mr. Sturge less anxious to keep his own movement distinct from theirs. 'The mildness of his manners,' says Mr. Miall, 'the simplicity of his speech his evident sincerity of purpose and benevolence of soul, added weight to the justice and reasonableness of the truths he propounded.'

The declaration was received with great favour. Signatures from electors and non-electors flowed in by thousands from various parts of the country, and it was thought no time should be lost in embodying the sentiment thus so generally evoked in some form of practical policy and organisation. Mr. Sturge, as was his wont, began at Birmingham. A provisional committee was formed there at the beginning of 1842 to initiate the

movement. They entered into correspondence with the friends of reform in all parts of the country, and having collected a large body of opinion favourable to the principle of the declaration, on February 25 a meeting of the nature of a conference was called at the Waterloo Rooms, to submit to the inhabitants of the town the information that had been thus gathered, and to ascertain their views on the subject. At the hour appointed for commencing the proceedings, the large room, we are told, 'was filled by manufacturers, tradespeople and working men.' After some discussion the meeting determined to appoint canvassers to solicit signatures to a memorial to the Queen founded after the declaration in favour of complete suffrage. In less than a month the canvassers could report that upwards of 16,000 of their fellow-townsmen, including about 2,000 electors, had affixed their names to the document. On March 21, a public meeting was held at the town hall to report the result, and to appoint delegates to attend a general conference which it was now determined should be held on the following April. On the 5th of that month accordingly, eighty-seven delegates from different parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, met at Birmingham. Great care had been taken in the arrangements made for the appointment of delegates; both that they should have a genuine representative character, and that they should consist, as nearly as possible, in equal proportions of middle-class and working-class men. Many fears were entertained by those who convened the meeting as to how far these two elements could be brought to combine. For, as we have already attempted to explain, mutual prejudice and jealousy had grown fierce between them. We cannot better describe the result than by borrowing a

few sentences from an article which soon after appeared in the 'Eclectic Review,' and which, as is now no secret, was from the pen of Mr. Edward Miall :—

'The sessions of the body lasted four days, the discussions occupying about nine hours each day. The forms observed were regular, and adhered to with the utmost strictness. A deep tone of earnestness ran through all the debates. The errors of the past were freely adverted to on both sides, and occasionally self-vindication compelled the speakers to tread on tender ground; yet not once during the whole time did interruption occur, or disapprobation find vent in rude clamour. As the several stages of interval between the two sections were safely passed, interest became more feverish; and when the last topic of difference, the discussion of which lasted the whole of the third day, was under debate, excitement verged on irritability. . . . . But the last ground of dispute was now cast away. Joy gleamed in every eye, and in some glittered behind tears. The resolution was put to the meeting. Every hand was held up in its favour, and now emotion would have vent. A shout of triumph shook the walls of the room. Delegates of both classes grasped each other by the hand, and mutually congratulated each other upon their happy escape from the menaced danger.'

We greatly fear that all this appearance of earnestness in the discussion of political questions will seem ludicrous enough to the advanced intelligence and philosophy of our age. We have learnt to deal with all such matters in another temper, that of genteel indifference or cynical disdain.

Ultimately it was resolved—

'That an association be now formed, to be entitled "The National Complete Suffrage Union," and that the following be its object: 1. The creating and extending an enlightened public opinion in favour of the principle and necessary details of complete suffrage, viz. the extension of the elective fran-

chise to every man twenty-one years of age, who has not been deprived of his citizenship in consequence of a verdict of his countrymen; the abolition of the property qualification for members of parliament; the adoption of voting by ballot; the dividing the country into equal electoral districts; the payment of all the legal election expenses, and a reasonable remuneration to members of parliament; and that annual parliaments are a proper means for securing responsibility of members to their constituents.'

For some time after this meeting, those who were trying to promote reconciliation between the middle and working classes were sanguine in their hopes of success. From many parts of the kingdom adhesions were received to the platform adopted at Birmingham. A considerable number of the more intelligent and moderate of the Chartists cordially accepted the overtures for union made to them. A motion embodying all the points enumerated above as the basis of the association, and pledging the House 'on an early day to resolve itself into a committee of the whole House for the purpose of considering the same,' was submitted to the House of Commons by Mr. Sharman Crawford, and supported by seventy-four votes.

Just at the critical time, too, an opportunity offered itself to test the popularity of the movement by an appeal to a constituency in which the two elements proposed to be united existed in larger measure than in almost any constituency in the kingdom. The town of Nottingham had, within the last few years, acquired great notoriety by its electoral contests. At the election of April 1841, Mr. Walter, the proprietor of the 'Times,' had defeated the Whig candidate. But when the Whigs appealed to the country in support of their commercial measures, in July of the same year, this decision was reversed. Mr. Walter was defeated and

Sir J. C. Hobhouse and Sir G. Larpent returned. A petition, however, was presented against their return on the ground of corruption and bribery. It was no secret that at both elections corrupt means had been employed in the most shameless manner, and to an enormous extent. While the inquiry which ensued on the presentation of the petition was pending, the friends of freedom and purity of election, anticipating that the return of the successful candidates would be declared void, had already turned their attention to Joseph Sturge as the best man to lead their forlorn hope against both Whigs and Tories. But while they were in correspondence with him, intelligence reached Nottingham that the parties in London, fearing the inevitable exposures consequent on an inquiry, had entered into a compromise; Sir G. Larpent had accepted the Chiltern Hundreds, and it was agreed that Mr. Walter should walk over the course. These tidings excited great indignation among that portion of the inhabitants not committed to the policy of the two great parties who thus, for their own convenience, were making the borough a matter of sale and barter. This circumstance, combined with the high state of feeling already existing, created intense excitement in the town. A meeting was immediately called, and a requisition to Joseph Sturge to stand as a candidate at the coming election was adopted, and before the day was over, had been signed by between seven and eight hundred electors. In reply, Mr. Sturge accepted the nomination on the following rather unusual 'conditions:' —'That no money be spent, or any improper influence used to bias a single vote in my favour; and that in the event of my return to parliament, if I find from experience that I could not conscientiously retain my

seat, or that I could be more serviceable to my country by resigning it, I should be at liberty to do so.' On May 18, he visited the town, and was received by a large concourse of people who had assembled to do him honour on his entry. He addressed an immense public meeting in the market-place in explanation of his principles, and after declaring himself opposed to Church establishments and military establishments, and the Corn and Provision laws, and in favour of an extension of the suffrage to every man of twenty-one years of age, unless disqualified by a verdict of a jury of his countrymen, he added, that while feeling it his duty to assert the social and political rights of his fellow-countrymen, he should 'deem it still incumbent on him especially to advocate the cause of those who are held in personal slavery in any part of the world, in accordance with the dictates of our holy religion, which teaches us that every country is our country, and every man our brother.' 'He would not,' he said, 'pay one sixpence towards securing his election. He said this as a matter of conscience, and he would also say, though not out of disrespect to the electors, that he would not ask for a vote, even if it would turn the election in his favour.'

His opponent, Mr. Walter, also soon appeared on the scene, and endeavoured to excite prejudice against Mr. Sturge, by describing him as 'the advocate of two principles, the charter and teetotalism.' It may, indeed, be regarded as a very singular tribute to the high personal character of Mr. Sturge, that in a contest conducted on such principles as he avowed—a contest in which there were no banners or processions, or open public-houses, or personal canvass, or pecuniary expenditure of any kind—the popular element nevertheless

rallied around him with extraordinary enthusiasm. As a specimen of his political oratory, perhaps it may be well to cite here a portion of the speech he delivered on the day of his nomination. After avowing and defending the various points for which he contended in his Complete Suffrage Association, he thus concluded :—

'But you are told that I will not make any pecuniary sacrifices for you. It is true I told you I would not give you sixpence for your votes, and I repeat it. If I am worth anything, I am worth the trouble of sending me free of expense, subject to this declaration, that if you return me, the moment a majority of the people wish me to resign my seat, I will do it. From this, do not understand that I will not go to the poll. As I have already stated, if only six honest men wish to record their votes for me, they shall have an opportunity of doing so. Whilst I abhor bribery, and whilst I would warn you to beware of the briber, I consider the rich man who offers the bribe to be a greater criminal than the poor man who accepts it. I am glad that we have to fight this great battle first in Nottingham, and that our opponent is the leviathan of the public press. First, because in Nottingham, though it is renowned for its contests in favour of liberty, yet, from the revolting disclosures which have lately taken place, it is evident all that a profuse expenditure by both the political parties could accomplish has been done to corrupt the constituents; and secondly, because I wish the strength of our principles to be contested with one who wields a power, in comparison with which that of the greatest potentate on earth dwindles into insignificance. It was said by Sheridan, in the House of Commons, at a time when Napoleon was in the plenitude of his power, "Bonaparte may withstand all the artillery of the enemy in front of his army, but he cannot withstand the silent but more powerful artillery of the pen." He afterwards went on to describe, with that eloquence for which he was so celebrated, the fall of the liberties of a people

one by one before the power of despotism, and then exclaimed, "But leave me only the liberty of the press. With this mighty engine I would destroy the fabric of corruption, and build on its ruins the rights and privileges of the people." But (said Mr. S. with great good humour, and pointing to Mr. Walter), "how are the mighty fallen!" Sheridan perhaps little thought that the day would come when the London newspaper press would become so venal that with a little exception—and three of those exceptions I will mention, the "Morning Advertiser," the "Nonconformist," and the "British Statesman"—the people look in vain for an uncompromising and an unpaid advocacy through its channels. And what has been the consequence? Why, that this press has so justly lost the confidence of the people, that he who controls the most powerful engine in the world is now carrying on a contest, with not very sanguine hopes of success, with an individual without political or family influence, and whom he called in derision, through the columns of the "Times," but a few months ago, "the Birmingham Quaker Chartist." If our principles should triumph here, with such fearful odds against them, it may, indeed, animate with lively hope every constituency in the kingdom. But, whatever may be the result of to-morrow's poll, I can assure our opponents that I will use any influence I possess to prevent the slightest act of violence or incivility on the part of those who wish to promote my election; and I wish also to assure my friends, that I would rather our rivals succeeded by an overwhelming majority, than that the victory to our cause was obtained by a single act that could tarnish its lustre. I hope we may look to our opponents heartily to co-operate with us in the promotion of peace and good order. It is a beautiful feature in Christian principle, and a stamp of its divine authority, that when it is carried into practice it promotes the happiness of all classes; and should these principles have an ascendency in our legislature, I feel persuaded that this empire might yet be the most prosperous upon earth. The defiance of all law and order, and of all social and political morality, which has been exposed in the conduct of the professed representatives of the people, has disgraced our

country in the eyes of the civilised world; but I confidently hope that, before to-morrow's sun has attained its meridian height, Nottingham will have raised a standard, with peace, law, and order inscribed upon it, round which the friends of purity of election and human liberty will rally with rapidly increasing strength, until, with resistless power, they shall sweep away the enormous evils of class legislation, and raise in their stead a temple of imperishable materials, dedicated to a full, fair, and free representation of the people.

After a very severe contest Mr. Walter was returned, the numbers being:—

Walter	1,885
Sturge	1,801
Majority for Walter . .	84

An election committee, however, unseated Mr. Walter. The seat was offered to Mr. Sturge, on his petition, but he declined to take that step. He was again invited to stand, but declined that also. But Mr. Gisborne, who contested the borough on the principles of complete suffrage against Mr. Walter, jun., was returned by a considerable majority.

Miss Sturge had, at his own request, accompanied her brother to Nottingham, and from her letters we have a pleasant glimpse behind the scenes—into her and his alternation and conflict of feeling, amid circumstances to them so unusual: 'To a friend less interested than thou art,' she says in one of her letters, 'in everything pertaining to us, I should find it difficult to explain why Joseph wished me to accompany him. It arose from that feeling which is stronger in him than in many weaker men, of leaning on affection in moments of trial and perplexity.' And after the election was over, she writes, under date of 8th Mo. 16, 1842:—

'As for Nottingham, I think Joseph has felt it—I am sure I have—an unlooked-for victory. I do not mean that it did not at one time appear likely for him to have been the successful candidate; but I dared not anticipate that the whole affair would have been so satisfactory—so truly, notwithstanding the annoyance of Feargus O'Connor, what an election should be. Thou hast read Joseph's speech at the nomination; several who were present speak of his manner and delivery in terms of warm commendation. Badly as he often expresses himself on common occasions, under the influence of deep feeling he becomes almost eloquent. . . . I see the danger of his situation, and have often been visited with doubts whether he ought to be thus engaged; but when I have been almost arriving at the conclusion that he should withdraw, some striking exhibition of the power with which he is enabled to meet one or another trying exigency, gives such evidence of the preserving tender care of his gracious Master, that, knowing as I do his sincere desire to follow His guidance, I cannot believe that he is, or will be, left to the dictates of his own erring will.'

The most gratifying circumstance connected with this election, was the perfect cordiality with which electors and non-electors at Nottingham combined for his support. Mr. Feargus O'Connor, Mr. Henry Vincent, and other popular leaders of the Chartist body visited the town as the strenuous upholders of Mr. Sturge's candidateship. He and those associated with him in the suffrage movement accepted these facts as full of favourable augury for the union between the middle and working classes which they were labouring to effect. For a time there were many other propitious appearances. The infamous practices brought to light by Mr. Roebuck's 'Elections' Compromise Committee,' already referred to, impressed many minds with the necessity of some change to save the country from

festering into a mass of political corruption. Many of the liberal provincial journals ably espoused the movement inaugurated by Mr. Sturge. Auxiliary associations were being rapidly formed in most of the large and many of the smaller towns throughout the country. But just at that time there came a serious check:—

'Driven to desperation by their sufferings, and left in neglect by the government and legislature, the operatives broke out into wide-spread insurrection, and our mining and manufacturing districts became the scene of a strike unprecedented in its extent, singularly mild in its prevailing characteristics, originally directed almost exclusively to an increase of wages, but artfully fomented and turned to political account by the old Chartist leaders. The authorities took the alarm; the middle classes were turned out as special constables; the police forces were strengthened; the military were despatched to the scene of disorder; collision ensued in several towns—loss of life, exasperation of feeling; the old sore, not yet healed, broke out afresh; and the prospects of the complete suffrage movement were again overshadowed by a dark cloud.'*

This was a time of great trial for Mr. Sturge and his colleagues. But they did not shrink from their post. They issued two addresses—one to the enfranchised classes, entreating them to give expression to a kindly sympathy for their less favoured countrymen at that critical moment, as the best means of calming them down into patience—the other to the unenfranchised classes, promising them new exertions for the recovery of their rights, and entreating them to resign all hopeless contests, and to trust to peaceful efforts and moral means alone.

There were other obstructions, also, of a different

* *The Rise and Progress of the Complete Suffrage Movement*, p. 19.

nature to that fusion of classes which Mr. Sturge so much desired, arising from the selfish personal ambition of certain self-constituted leaders of the working-classes. The most conspicuous of these was Feargus O'Connor. He was an Irishman by birth, and boasted of being descended from the ancient kings of that country. He began his public life as a member of what was called Mr. O'Connell's tail, devoting himself for a while with great ardour and energy to the person and cause of the great agitator. In that interest he was returned to parliament, in 1833, for the county of Cork. But his aspiring and turbulent disposition did not permit him to remain long in the ranks of any party. He attempted to share the leadership of the Irish people with his chief. But Mr. O'Connell, who never could 'bear a brother near the throne,' and whose influence in Ireland was at that time unbounded, very easily extinguished his mutinous lieutenant so far as he possessed any influence among his countrymen. Driven thus from the field of Irish agitation, he transferred his services to the working-classes of England. Though a man of slender intellect, and utterly devoid of judgment, he possessed some qualities which well fitted him for the character of a demagogue. He was a man of almost gigantic stature, upwards of six feet high, and brawny and broad-chested in proportion. When his oratory was unavailing, he could, and did on occasion, fling himself into the thick of an excited crowd, and by his pugilistic prowess make an impression on those whom his eloquence had failed to convince. But he had, also, considerable powers as a mob orator. He possessed abundant fluency of speech, and a stentorian strength of lungs which, in the large out-of-door gatherings then common among the working-classes, gave him great

advantage over all competitors, for the roar of his voice would reach the ears of a vast multitude, where the oratory of others would be little better than dumb show. He knew also how to wield with effect a certain coarse facetiousness which tickled the ears of the vulgar, and threw them into uproarious laughter. In addition to all which he indulged habitually in the most fulsome flattery of the common people, affected to call them his 'children,' and to have made great pecuniary and other sacrifices for their behoof. He had, moreover, established a newspaper entitled 'The Northern Star,' which had a very extensive circulation, and which he took every pains to make the organ of the Chartists by reporting their meetings at great length, accompanied with the wildest exaggerations of the numbers present, and the most extravagant eulogies on the eloquence of those who flourished as the oracles of the occasion. By these means O'Connor had acquired immense influence over large bodies of the working-men, especially in the north of England. This influence he was determined to retain against all intruders, and being utterly unscrupulous, never hesitated to hunt down by accusation of secret treason, or dishonesty, or peculation, every leader of the party who showed any signs of independence, or of rebellion against his authority. He was, moreover, the declared advocate of physical force, and though he displayed a considerable share of the discretion which contrives to avoid overt and indictable language, his speeches and writings abounded with those dangerous implications and equivocal bravadoes which served to inflame the passions of ignorant men, and prepare them for any enterprise of violence.

It was not very likely that a man of this character should look with much favour upon the movement at

the head of which Joseph Sturge had placed himself. He accordingly denounced it from the first, described Mr. Sturge as 'a cunning tool of the Anti-Corn-Law League,' and insinuated, as was his wont, that he had private intelligence disclosing the dishonest intentions of the Complete Suffragists.

It is true that, with that audacious inconsistency with which he tried so largely the credulity of his followers, he had gone down to Nottingham during the election, and, not a little to the annoyance of Mr. Sturge, proclaimed himself his devoted partisan, and declared that 'wherever the name of philanthropy and kind-heartedness to his fellow-men were heard, there was Joseph Sturge's name to be heard also.' But when the contest was over, and partly perhaps because of the enthusiasm with which Mr. Sturge had been received by the non-electors during the contests, O'Connor reverted to the old strain of distrust and defiance. He consented, however, to a proposal for holding another conference on a larger scale at Birmingham, with a view to discuss the matters in dispute between the middle and working-classes. Considerable pains had been taken to have this conference fairly constituted. It was arranged that in the choice of delegates, electors, and non-electors should return an equal number, except in cases where both bodies could agree to elect the same persons. On December 27, 1842, the conference, numbering nearly 400 persons, met at the Mechanics' Institution, Birmingham. Mr. Sturge was unanimously elected to preside. In his opening remarks he stated that 'the main endeavours of the Complete Suffrage Union had been directed towards breaking down the prejudices of the electors and middle classes, that they might be induced to grant complete justice to their unenfranchised countrymen.'

'The success we have already met with,' he continued, 'gives us good ground to hope that, by forbearance and argument, we shall do much to remove the alienation which has been so lamentably fostered and increased by the events of the last few years. Having at a former conference adopted all the six points which involve any question of principle in what is called the "the people's charter," I had hoped it would at least have removed suspicion towards us from the minds of all upright friends of the people; and while we invite the most vigilant watchfulness of our every movement on the part of our fellow-countrymen, we consider we are entitled to claim credit for honesty of intention until the contrary is proved against us; but we are resolved not to be parties to any steps whatever which involve the slightest violation of our peaceable principles, or go further in offending the prejudices of those at whose hands we seek redress, than is called for by a firm adherence to the claim of full justice for our unenfranchised brethren. Whilst men in power professing Christianity, like Lord John Russell, can be justly accused, as he was by his political rival Sir Robert Peel, of inviting one portion of the community to arm against another; while both these high parties bribe our young men to engage in a murderous crusade against the unoffending inhabitants of China and India, and pay them for it with money which is taken out of the pockets of the people; whilst the leading political journals vie with each other in scurrility and falsehood—I cannot wonder that some in a different sphere are found to follow so bad an example. But such conduct is not Christianity. That pure religion teaches us not only "to do unto others as we wish they should do unto us," but also "to return good for evil;" and we must not expect to obtain the Divine blessing on evil means even in a righteous cause. I wish therefore emphatically to assure this assembly, and I am persuaded I speak the sentiments of every member of the Complete Suffrage Council, that we cannot knowingly act in unison with any who recommend or countenance violence for the attainment of their object; or who, instead of cordially uniting with all honest

men to obtain the rights of the people, waste their time in abusing those who do not exactly tread in their steps. At the same time I trust that when any who have thus acted prove by future deeds as well as words that they have seen their error, the past will be for ever buried in oblivion.'

For a time there was considerable promise of harmony. There were professions of moderation and good temper on all sides. But when the Conference came to consider the question as to what should be taken as the basis of their discussions, there arose a strong divergence of opinion. Properly speaking, indeed, this ought not to have been regarded as an open question. The Conference had been called by the Complete Suffrage Union, and on its own principles, which were by that time sufficiently notorious. Those, therefore, who were not prepared to accept those principles as the point of departure had no business to be there. Mr. Sturge's party accordingly proposed that a bill which had been prepared by the council of the Complete Suffrage Union should be adopted as the basis of deliberation, while Mr. O'Connor's party contended strenuously for the document called 'The People's Charter.' Substantially there was little difference between the two. But Mr. Sturge and his friends contended that the name of the Charter was in such ill odour, owing to the violent language and conduct of some of its advocates in time past, that it was regarded by many of the middle classes as synonymous with tumult and bloodshed. The leaders of the Chartists, on the other hand, maintained that it was the old banner around which the working classes had been accustomed to rally, and that it was endeared to their hearts by the memories, the hopes, and even the sufferings associated with its name. On this ground, therefore, the first battle had to be fought. In the

course of the debate which ensued, the effects of the virus of suspicion and violence infused by O'Connor into the minds of his followers became painfully apparent. Sentiments were avowed and language used which proved clearly enough that, even if they could have agreed on a common political platform, it was not possible that such elements could combine. And when the advocates of the Charter carried their amendment by a large majority, Mr. Sturge's friends felt thankful that this result left him at liberty honourably to withdraw from such uncongenial fellowship. He and the minority which accorded with him retired to another room in the town, where they resumed the discussion of the bill prepared by the Suffrage Union. It cannot be denied that this issue of the Birmingham Conference dealt a heavy blow to Mr. Sturge's project. Not only was the rupture between his party and the extreme Chartists complete and final, but the deliberations of the Conference and its results were held up to triumphant scorn by the Tory and Whig journals as an illustration of the working of universal suffrage. Among his own followers also, all that class, always the most numerous in the wake of every cause, who have no standard of merit but success, and have not enough of the martyr spirit even to bear a laugh, hastily drew away from his side when they found that fidelity to their banner involved some degree of peril and reproach.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT—*continued.*

Perseverance of the Leaders—But the Movement languishes—Election at Birmingham—Mr. Sturge's Defeat—Letters from him and his Sister—The Middle Classes absorbed with Free Trade—The Chartists bring Discredit on the Cause by Violence—Mr. Sturge gradually retires from the Movement—But retains his Convictions—His Politics connected with his Christianity—The distinctly Christian Tone he gave to his Advocacy of the Suffrage—Good Effects on the Working Classes—Testimony of Rev. C. Vince and Mr. Henry Vincent—Opposition from Members of his own Society—Letter of Miss Sturge—His own Religious Feelings during the Excitement—Letters to Mr. Tappan—Letters from Mr. Miall—Conversations with his Sister on her Death-bed—His last Appearance in Politics—Education Controversy—Withdraws from the British and Foreign School Society—Election at Leeds.

The leaders of the movement, however, were resolute men, not disposed lightly to surrender the object they had taken in hand. Mr. Sharman Crawford in the House of Commons, Mr. Edward Miall through the press, and Mr. Sturge in the country, still laboured on loyally in the cause. Mr. Crawford, with a brave temerity which extorted admiration even from his opponents, repeatedly pressed the question of the suffrage on the House of Commons. The agitation was carried on out of doors with considerable animation. Mr. Henry Vincent lent to it the aid of his fervid, popular eloquence, and Mr. Thomas Beggs that of his sound judgment and calm common sense. It began, however, inevitably to languish. The great bulk of the

working classes, with the glamour of delusion still before their eyes, had committed themselves to other guidance. The middle classes, whose patriotism is seldom very adventurous, studious of their own ease and profits, morbidly sensitive to ridicule, and scared by the fear of political disturbances, regarded the question with increasing apathy, the more especially as they saw in the growing strength of the Anti-Corn-Law League the prospect of another speedy remedy for the grievances which pressed most heavily upon themselves.

In the year 1844, another opportunity was afforded to Mr. Sturge of bringing the feelings of his countrymen on this subject to a test. So early as 1840, he had been solicited by a numerous and respectable body of his fellow-townsmen to stand as a candidate for Birmingham. He had so far consented as to issue an address explanatory of his political views. But from an unwillingness to divide the liberal interest, he did not go to the poll, his friends withdrawing his name on the understanding that the whole liberal party would support him at the next vacancy. This occurred in 1844 by the death of Mr. Joshua Scholefield. He was then brought forward again on the invitation of a large town's meeting, attended by several thousands of persons; 'and throughout the contest,' says a pamphlet published at the time, 'as well as at the nomination, the popular feeling was overwhelming in his favour.' His friends, who undertook to canvass the town on his behalf, declared, moreover, that they had received promises of support sufficiently numerous to have placed him at the head of the poll. But electors' promises, like lovers' vows, are proverbially frail. The Whig party, of course, forgot all about their understanding

with him at the previous election, and put forward the son of the late member as their candidate, while the Tories were represented by the respectable name of Mr. Spooner. The result was the return of Mr. Spooner by a considerable majority, only a few hundred votes having been recorded in favour of Mr. Sturge, while upwards of 2,000 voters, or nearly one-third of the electoral body, did not vote at all. In a letter written to his friend Mr. Lewis Tappan, under date of November 30, 1844, Mr. Sturge explains the causes of his defeat. He ascribes it mainly to his espousal of the cause of the unenfranchised, and admits—

'That the feeling of the electors against giving the franchise to the working classes was becoming more and more strong every year. It is true,' he adds, 'there were other causes. Of course the inn-keepers, gin-shop proprietors, and the beer-house keepers were generally against me. The members of the legal profession were also strongly against me, and when it became evident that I could not be returned, a large number of our voters went and voted for the Whig to keep out the Tory, and others, in pique, went and voted for the Tory to keep out the Whig, and a still larger number abstained from voting at all. But still it should be known that one of the great curses of our present system of representation is that it makes the separation wider and wider, as long as it lasts, between those who possess the franchise and those who do not.'

His sister, also, writing to the friend already referred to, thus remarks on the same event:—

'Well, the election is over, and the few votes recorded for Joseph will doubtless cause it to be esteemed a complete failure. This is humiliating to our poor human nature, but defeat is Joseph's weapon, and it has ever been made the means of forwarding any righteous cause in which he has been

engaged. No argument could so convincingly prove the fact, as this glaring illustration, of the total want of sympathy between the electors and non-electors. Two immense public meetings were almost unanimous in choosing him, and on the day of nomination the friends of the other candidates could not have been absent, yet it is reported that not more than fifty held up their hands for either. Joseph is, as usual, very calm in the consciousness of having discharged his duty, and well prepared for the abuse that will not fail to be heaped upon him.'

The abuse came in very ample profusion from that section of the liberal press which esteems party of more importance than principle. He was charged with having divided and betrayed the liberal party, together with the other forms of reproach customary on such occasions.

But by whatever explanations he and his friends naturally tried at the time to mitigate the mortification of so utter a defeat, they could not but feel that the issue of the contest was of the nature of an *experimentum crucis*, as respects the complete suffrage movement. If, after three years' incessant agitation in its favour, and at Birmingham, the head-quarters of the Union, with Joseph Sturge—whose great virtues his fellow-townsmen, to do them justice, never ceased to acknowledge and venerate—as its representative and champion, no more than about 350 voters could be found sufficiently in earnest to brave all considerations in support of the principles it affirmed, it was impossible to resist the conviction that its promoters had failed to enlist, to any considerable extent, the sympathies of the middle classes. It lingered on for some time longer, and for several years after this there are frequent allusions to the subject in Mr. Sturge's letters, showing how

anxious was the interest he still felt in the reconciliation of the middle and working classes. Thus, in April 1848, he writes to Mr. Tappan :—

'I am sorry to say that I fear the bitter feeling between the higher and a portion of the middle class, and the working classes, is increasing. The former seem determined not to grant their rights to the latter, while some of the latter seem disposed to try physical force for their attainment, and I have great fears that we may not pass through the next twelve months without bloodshed.'

By degrees, however, the manhood suffrage movement which he led faded out of public view. The commercial classes became more and more absorbed in the free trade agitation, which was yearly acquiring greater breadth and force. The leaders of the chartists, no longer restrained or moderated by the influence of their moral force coadjutors, rushed into wilder extremes of fanatic violence. And when the French revolution of 1848 came still further to inflame their excitement, their folly culminated in certain large and tumultuous assemblages held in London, and in the presentation of a monster petition to parliament, professing to bear we know not how many millions of signatures, but a large proportion of which were found, on being scrutinised by a committee of the House, to consist of forged or fictitious names. All this served for a while to bring utter discredit on the whole question of electoral reform. Mr. Sturge continued to the last day of his life faithful to his early convictions on this subject, though advancing age, and perhaps a secret consciousness that he was more fitted by character and taste for the promotion of moral than political reform, led him to decline taking any active part, after this period, in such agitation. In reply to

an invitation to attend a meeting on parliamentary reform at Birmingham, in 1852, he wrote the following letter to the chairman :—

'Although I have at a former period of my life devoted no small portion of my time, labour, and money to obtain the rights of my unenfranchised fellow-countrymen, yet I do not see it to be my place to accept the kind invitation I have received to take part in the present movement. I wish, however, to be allowed to state that time and calm reflection have, if possible, strengthened my conviction of the duty and policy of granting to the people that to which they are entitled, alike by the principles of the British constitution and by Christian equity, namely, an equality of political rights, without reference to their being owners or occupiers of any kind of property. Those who withhold these rights from them are, in my opinion, still more criminal in doing so, from the fact that the great body of the working population in this country have long proved by their conduct that they are at least as well qualified for the exercise of their rights as that comparatively small number who now elect our law-makers.

'Very respectfully,

'Joseph Sturge.'

The biographer has no purpose whatever to write of this passage in Mr. Sturge's history in an apologetic tone, as though it were what some have called it, the great error of his life. Far from deeming it an error at all, he regards the part he took in the suffrage agitation as one of the truest and bravest things he ever did. He contends that not only were his motives lofty and pure, which no one acquainted with him could for a moment dispute, but that, with the views he entertained, the course he took was right in itself, imperatively required by that fealty to conscience, which was the underlying principle of his whole existence, and

furnishes one of the finest illustrations we have of his high character as a man and as a Christian. For, strange as it may appear to those who are disposed to look upon all politics as irreligious, and upon all radical politics as infidel, yet nothing is more certain than that what was called the Chartism of Joseph Sturge sprung directly from his Christianity. His struggles for the rights of his unenfranchised countrymen had the same source as his efforts for the liberties of the emancipated negroes. Seeing how distinctly the Gospel recognises the essential dignity and worth of the individual human soul, he could not complacently acquiesce in social and political arrangements which consigned large bodies of his fellow-men to a condition in which they are treated as property, as is the case under slavery, or as mere instruments of labour contributing to the wealth and power of a state, but entitled to no share in the active rights of citizenship, as he believed to be the case under the modern system of representation.

He felt strongly, though he might not have expressed it so happily, the sentiment of the poet, that

> 'Our life is turned
> Out of her course, wherever man is made
> An offering or a sacrifice; a tool
> Or implement; a passive thing employed
> As a brute mean, without acknowledgment
> Of common right, or interest in the end;
> Used or abused as selfishness may prompt.'*

Hence the pertinacity with which he clung to the idea of a *manhood* suffrage, that is, a suffrage in which the right to have a voice in public affairs inhered in the man, and not in any accident of property or social position. He believed profoundly that Christianity itself was compromised and dishonoured by the selfishness which led persons calling themselves Christians rudely

* Wordsworth.

to thrust back millions of upright, laborious, deserving men from all share in political privileges which they themselves highly prized, lest haply their own supremacy or convenience should be brought into any hazard thereby. He was aware, from his familiar intercourse with the working classes, that all this was to a most deplorable extent prejudicing their minds and hardening their hearts against the claims of that blessed religion which was to him dearer than life, and throwing them more and more into the hands of flippant talkers, who were ready, by a cunning use of their political wrongs, to rob them of what has been justly called the last restraint of the powerful and the last hope of the miserable. In illustration of the views entertained by him on this point, we subjoin the following paper of suggestions transmitted in 1842, by his sister, who was his secretary and intimate counsellor in all these matters, to an able friend, who wielded the pen of a ready writer, which was often employed as the interpreter of Mr. Sturge's sentiments and objects to the world :—

'Stirling's excellent essay on the Franchise suggested a wish that the able writer or some other competent to the task would continue the subject, more exclusively bearing on its moral and religious aspects, in a direct appeal to Christians of every class.

'To begin by laying the foundation of the present claim to justice on a far wider and stronger basis than the fallacy of an imaginary contract, by asserting the unquestionable truth, that Almighty God is the only source of power—that He only *could* have granted an exclusive charter of privilege, that He has made no difference, that all are alike in His sight, are in the same condition, have the same faculties and responsibilities.

'That this equality is the birthright of man, the inalienable

gift of God, proved by the whole tenour of sacred history, and emphatically sealed by the Redeemer of mankind, who gave Himself a ransom for the whole human family.

'Depict the wide-spread evils of irresponsible power, as it affects whole classes of the community, the temptations to which they are exposed, and the almost inevitable consequence, entire alienation from God.

'Point out the baneful effects of human degradation, its inseparable vices, and the necessity for man's elevation, to enable him to understand his duties and appreciate the blessings of the Gospel.

'Show that the conduct of Christians in retaining possession of unjust power, is a great hindrance to the power of Christianity, by affording its enemies strong arguments against its efficacy, and discouraging honest enquirers after truth by such flagrant exhibitions of the selfishness of religious professors.'

It was the same spirit which pervaded the whole of his efforts for the enfranchisement of the masses. He seldom made a speech without putting forward the distinctively *Christian* grounds upon which he acted. It mattered not to him what was the character of his audience. He must have often been aware that many of those who heard him had small respect for the religious principles to which he appealed, but having an unfaltering faith in the fact that the Gospel was the truest foundation for human liberty, he was in that, as in other respects, 'not ashamed of the Gospel,' while his obvious simplicity and sincerity saved him from the imputation of hypocrisy or cant on the part of even the most sceptical of his hearers.

Nor can there be a doubt that the part he took did exercise a salutary influence over large bodies of the working men in checking the infidelity that was so rife among them, and recalling them to a respect for Christianity which they were on the eve of losing altogether.

At the time of his death a funeral sermon was preached for him by a gentleman who in early life had been a violent political chartist, but who is now one of the ablest and most respected ministers of the Baptist denomination, and the pastor of a large congregation belonging to that body in Birmingham. We refer to the Rev. Charles Vince. In delineating Mr. Sturge's character, Mr. Vince made some references to his own history strikingly illustrative of the remarks we have just made. Though that discourse was not published, we have the author's permission to cite the following passage from notes furnished to us by one of his hearers. The text was, 'He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost:'—

'He manifested his goodness,' said Mr. Vince, 'in his supreme regard for God's will. . . . The question "What wilt thou have me do?" was no stranger to the lips of Joseph Sturge. In religion, morals, and benevolence, he recognised this basis for all his conduct. Even his very political opinions and proceedings were founded on it. I find that on one occasion when he offered himself for a seat in parliament, he commenced his speech on the hustings by announcing that his political creed was based upon the Scriptural injunction, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye so unto them." You are aware that he sought to give every man a vote in making the laws which he is called upon to obey. "Ah!" say others, "let a man first secure the character that shall ensure his using his vote honestly and well." "Nay," said he, "that is not God's method. He first gives the privileges of a son to them that are ignorant and out of the way, and after that comes all the training that shall fit them for their high vocation."

'You may say this is a little matter, but whether it be so or not, it has a personal interest for me. Years ago, I held all the same principles in politics which Joseph Sturge held, but then I did so, not in his spirit, but in the spirit of the infidel

Sunday newspaper. Presently I came in contact with his writings and those of his coadjutors, and found them contending on *Christian* principles for those very things which I had sought as being destructive of religion and priestcraft. I found that priestcraft was not religion. The discovery opened to me a new world. I found that Joseph Sturge, and others like-minded with himself, saw the Pole-star of Truth, and had followed it, and that in the whole range of human affairs the following out of God's will is the true line of our interest and duty.'

To the same effect is the testimony of Mr. Henry Vincent, whose long and intimate association with the working classes gave him as ample opportunities of observation as any man in the kingdom. In a letter to the biographer he says :—

'The suffrage movement of which Joseph Sturge was the soul did good in everything. It brought about a better feeling between the middle and working classes, and allayed the fiercer exasperation of the people by proving that men of Christian character were willing to risk popularity with the wealthy and powerful in their desire to serve them. It pushed men of high character into prominence, and breathed, for the first time since the return of the Stuarts, a Christian principle into political action. It raised many men in sobriety by its moral appeals. I can bear testimony to the strong desire of Joseph Sturge that everything should be subordinated to the "higher law," and that he was moved in his political action "to do unto all men as he would they should do unto him." I was with him all through the Nottingham election in 1842. The moral effect of that contest was astonishing. In a town long accustomed to bribery, not a shilling was expended improperly, order reigned, virtue was extolled; the people for the time seemed as if they were swayed by an almost superhuman influence. I have seen him in stormy assemblies, and have remarked the influence of his very presence in stilling clamour, and in calling forth the noblest sympathies of the

people. Many men there are, whom I need not name, now living useful lives, who may be called his political children.'

It cannot be denied, indeed, that the course which Mr. Sturge took on the suffrage question deeply grieved some of his friends. Partly from entire want of sympathy with his political views, and partly, also, undoubtedly from genuine solicitude for his spiritual interests, his political activities were observed with sorrow and disapproval by many members of his own religious society. We have before us, now, a bundle of letters of remonstrance written to him on the subject, most of them couched in language of anxious but most affectionate and kindly warning, but some indulging in harsh expressions which must, and did, deeply wound the sensitive heart against which they were directed. 'Amid such a scene of conflict as Joseph has entered upon,' says his sister in writing to a friend, 'one hardly dares glance into the future—so much trial, so many dangers must await him. He is already beginning to feel the shyness of friends, and at one monthly meeting there was an ebullition of something more.'

No doubt this alienation of old friends was a very bitter trial to him, but can we desire any better evidence of the strength of principle and purpose by which he was actuated than his persevering so stedfastly in the course he had adopted in the face of such opposition? We regret that we have failed to recover any of the answers he wrote to the remonstrant letters to which we have alluded, as they would no doubt have contained most interesting disclosures of the state of his mind in the midst of these trying circumstances. We are not, however, without some indications of what his feelings were while passing through the outward excite-

ments amidst which he was then living. They were of the same humble self-distrusting tone as was habitual with him. The first of the following letters to Mr. Lewis Tappan refers to one of those commercial hurricanes which visit the United States at intervals, and commit such sudden havoc on the fortunes of its merchants. Among many other large houses which foundered in that storm of 1842 was that of Arthur and Lewis Tappan. These admirable men, whose names are intimately associated with all enterprises of philanthropy and benevolence in America, had, by their industry and energy, grown from small beginnings to a great height of commercial prosperity. They had made the noblest use of their wealth, giving with an open hand not only their money, but their time, their influence, their personal service, to promote the cause of Christian truth and human freedom. That, however, did not save them from wreck at the time referred to. It is in allusion to this that Mr. Sturge writes, under date of 9 mo. 17, 1842 :—

'My dear Friend,—I am in receipt of thy letter of the 31st ult., and am deeply concerned to hear of the final result of the winding up of the concern of A. and L. Tappan. I had hoped that it might have pleased Providence that it should have been so far otherwise as, at least, to have left you a comfortable means of support, and leisure to devote your *time*, if you could not money, to those objects which are so near and dear to you. But the ways of God are not as our ways, nor are His thoughts as our thoughts. In His fatherly corrections he often sees meet to try us most closely upon those points which we think most hard to bear, and to teach us there is such a thing as an unlawful desire for lawful things; and perhaps thy noble and generous-hearted brother, who wished only for wealth to enable him to lessen the sum of human misery, may be permitted to see that neither

his happiness nor his usefulness would have been promoted had his desires in this respect been granted. I hope and believe that the Divine blessing will accompany him to his retirement, and should his day of active labour be nearly closed, may he be permitted the assurance that his day's work has kept pace with the day, and that to him who feels that, through the boundless mercy of a crucified Redeemer, he has a well-grounded hope that he shall safely enter that city "whose walls are salvation, and whose gates are praise," it matters little whether he be actually employed or belong to those of whom it is said—

'"They also serve who only stand and wait."

'Please remember me affectionately to him.'

In 1843, Mr. Lewis Tappan paid a visit to England to attend the Anti-Slavery Convention, of which we shall have presently to speak. He and Mr. Sturge were thoroughly congenial spirits, and the society of his friend had evidently afforded him great pleasure and encouragement. The following letter refers to this :—

'Thou would'st no doubt, hear the encouraging news about Texas long before we did; we must now watch that the abolition of slavery is included in the conditions of peace between Mexico and Texas, and do what we can to promote it.

'Thy kind expressions of thanks for any little attentions I was able to show thee, I felt quite undeserved, as they were very little in comparison to what I received of thee while in America. But my heart was too full to tell thee how much I felt when we parted, under the consideration that it was more than probable I should never again meet on this side of eternity, one to whom I felt united as to a brother, and whose hopeful and cheerful spirit had in our (to me) very instructive but too brief intercourse, animated my heart, so often weighed down with discouragement, not so much by

outward circumstances, as by the deep, and at times overwhelming, sense of my weakness and manifold sins of omission and commission, and my immeasurable distance from the state in which alone we can be permitted a place in that kingdom where nothing that is unholy can enter, while at the same time I cannot feel that assurance of personal interest in the atoning sacrifice of Him whose blood cleanseth from all sin, on which I could confidently rest while passing through the valley of the shadow of death. But perhaps, before I arrive there, a brighter view may in unmerited mercy be granted to me.'

As a further illustration of the earnest religious spirit in which the enterprise was prosecuted by those most prominently concerned in it, we may, we hope without impropriety, select a few sentences from the letters written to him at the time by one who, next to himself, bore the most important part in the movement, and was probably, of all his political associates, the one in most intimate sympathy of mind and heart with him. Mr. Miall thus writes to him on Jan. 28, 1842 :—

'The movement in which we are engaged is too mighty a one to be undertaken in any other spirit than that of deference to the Divine will, and dependence on Divine strength. Politically regarded, merely, it is full of danger. We are raising a power which we may be unable to control if chafed by aristocratic opposition. But faith in Him who "stills the noise of the waves and the tumults of the people" will, I doubt not, bring us through without violent collision. The more necessity is there to get our cause well founded in the religious portion of the public, before party men and politicians take part in it.'

A few months later he writes again to cheer his friend, 'lest the multitude of his perplexities should discourage him :'—

'When you entered upon your present course, sanguine as you might have been of success at no very distant day, you were of course prepared to meet with difficulties and disappointments. You had no personal end to serve. You obeyed the high and imperative dictates of conscience and religion. You have a right, therefore, to expect God's blessing on your labours and sacrifices, and whether you attain your object or fail of obtaining it, you may yet expect the smile of the Universal Ruler on your efforts. I trust, therefore, you will never deny yourself the satisfaction of having done what you could. You are not responsible for results—you cannot command them. But you are under obligation to persevere in well-doing, even when everything would seem to be going wrong. If we live, we may have to sustain more distressing reverses than any we have yet seen, and nothing but a lively and active faith will bear us triumphantly through them all. Therefore, suffer me to say, in earnest sincerity, "Cheer up, brother;" this work is in God's hands, and what He has designed He can accomplish.'

But what, perhaps, more than anything else, will throw light upon the temper in which Mr. Sturge had entered upon and endeavoured to pursue that part of his public course of which we are now speaking, is furnished us by a record of his conversations with his beloved sister Sophia when she was on her death-bed. The paper from which we are about to quote a few extracts was a strictly private document, written for his own comfort and profit immediately after her decease :—

'Feeling that her end was approaching early on the afternoon of 1st day, the 26th, when I was alone with her, she said that before her death she wished to have had ability to converse with me and to encourage me, but intimated she now feared she might not have strength to do so. But she went on to

express her unshaken confidence that I should be preserved and supported. In reference to an enquiry of mine, whether I had not better withdraw altogether from public affairs, when I should no longer have her to watch over me, and to warn me of danger, she remarked, in substance, that she was not prepared to give me this advice, as, if I was preserved in a state of mind properly prayerful, humble, and watchful, it was a position in which so few bear a faithful testimony to our dear Saviour, it might not be right for me to desert it—that if I lived in humble dependence upon Divine aid from day to day, I should be able to see my path of duty and faithfully occupy it, saying at the same time that I had suffered from over anxiety and mental pressure, and want of sufficient time for quietude and retirement. She remarked on the inexpressible comfort it had been to her to have me so much with her during her illness, and signified that though she was then suffering so much from physical weakness, she was still favoured with a continuance of humble trust and faith in her Redeemer.'

On another occasion, when still nearer her death, she said:—

'That she had no doubt of the soundness of the principle on which I had advocated the rights of the people, and was quite satisfied with my having espoused their cause when they were oppressed and trampled upon, and when to do so was so unpopular that it was at the sacrifice of my own reputation. I had, however, committed many errors in the proceedings connected with it, greatly arising from acting too precipitately and yielding too much to the opinions of others, but that I had been, in an almost miraculous manner preserved from difficulties which might have been inextricable and irremediable. . . . She believed I had asked aid at these times of extremity where alone it was to be found, and that it had not been withheld from me.'

We may be very sure that that course of conduct could have been entered upon and pursued in no

irreligious spirit, respecting which the brother and sister could thus commune together amid the gathering shadows of eternity.

Before, however, entirely dismissing Mr. Sturge from the political arena, we must advert to one other occasion on which he appeared as candidate for a seat in parliament. In the years 1843–7 there arose a great educational controversy in this country. It sprung, immediately, from a measure for national education introduced into parliament in 1843, by Sir James Graham as a member of Sir Robert Peel's government. This was felt by the dissenters to be an unfair and dangerous measure, and a formidable opposition grew up against it, which obliged the ministers to withdraw the bill. The discussion, however, to which it gave rise, far from subsiding, continued with great animation for several years, ultimately resolving itself into a question of principle between the advocates of state and of voluntary education.

Mr. Sturge sided strongly with the latter, insomuch that when the Committee of the British and Foreign School Society, of which he had been a cordial supporter for many years, determined to accept aid from the Government, after doing all in his power to deter them from that resolution, he felt bound to withdraw from all connection with the institution. In doing so, he published the following letter, addressed

'TO THE SUBSCRIBERS TO THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN 'SCHOOL SOCIETY.

'Having long held the opinion that pecuniary grants for the purpose of religious instruction in schools and colleges, from the general taxation of the country, were unsound in principle, I rejoice that recent circumstances have brought the subject

under public consideration in a manner to command a fuller and more general investigation of it than it has ever before received. The conviction is now widely spreading amongst different Christian denominations that such grants are not only opposed to the voluntary principle, but that they are a direct infringement of the rights of private conscience, the practical evils of which are greatly aggravated when any particular sect receives exclusive privileges from the State.

'Under these circumstances, the surprise and regret which has been felt at the recent conclusion of the Committee of the British and Foreign School Society, to accept a part of their expenses from the Government, will doubtless be shared by a much more numerous portion of their supporters than would have been the case at any former period.

'A distinction is drawn by many between national property appropriated to the support of schools where the religious instruction is confined to the authorised English translation of the Scriptures, and the examination and comments upon it are entrusted to teachers selected by a managing committee, composed of persons of different religious denominations—and grants made to colleges or schools connected with particular religious persuasions. On a candid examination, it will, however, be found that it is impossible to impart any religious instruction supported from a tax upon the *whole* people, without a violation of the same principle in the one case as the other: and at a meeting of the friends of the British and Foreign School Society, convened by the committee themselves last year, embracing those who were considered most entitled to give them advice and counsel, it was evident the feeling was so decidedly opposed to the receipt of any Government aid, that a motion to leave it to the discretion of the committee to accept it or not, was withdrawn.

'Much as I deplore the step the committee has taken, I have never been so fully identified with the active labours of the institution as to consider it to be my duty to move a resolution at the approaching general meeting against it: yet in finally withdrawing from a Society to which I have for many years subscribed, and in the welfare of which I have

long felt a deep interest, I consider it right thus to state my reasons for doing so.

'All past history, I believe, proves that institutions partly supported by voluntary, and partly by compulsory, pecuniary aid do not permanently prosper; and if the latter is resorted to at all, it is much better that the whole should be derived from this source. There is no reason which can be urged in favour of the Government paying a part, which does not apply to the whole; and the effects of the Regium Donum show that a small annual Government grant may make the recipients subservient to the State. It must also be obvious that the voluntary principle cannot be thus infringed without paralysing it; for those who are taxed for the support of an institution cannot be expected willingly also to subscribe to it. The objection, however, of paramount importance is, that it is a violation of the rights of conscience towards all who contribute to the taxation of the country, and who are honestly opposed to any part of the religious instruction given in the schools.

'The country is now in great excitement in consequence of the proposed grant to the College of Maynooth, and many of the subscribers to the British and Foreign School Society are probably amongst its most decided opponents; but could not a Roman Catholic find grounds of equal validity to object to the grant made to the Borough Road School? It must be evident that any who are willing to accept Government aid for the dissemination of their own views of truth, cannot consistently object to similar grants to their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, or to Jews, or even Mahomedans, and Hindoos.

'It is deeply to be regretted that the committee have surrendered the high ground so long maintained by the Society, of giving a Scriptural education, aided only by voluntary contributions—and the importance of which was greater on account of the standard it upheld, than even the extent of instruction imparted. I hope, however, that they who can no longer support the Society in its new position, will feel called upon in an especial manner to promote education in their

respective localities; and should the unfavourable anticipations of the result of the step now taken by the committee be realised, it should never be forgotten that the labours of the British and Foreign School Society have been an inestimable blessing to the present generation.

'Very respectfully,

'Joseph Sturge.

'Birmingham: 4th month (April), 24th, 1845.'

Owing to the prominent part taken by Mr. Edward Baines, now M.P. for Leeds, in this educational controversy, having in fact been the foremost leader of the voluntaries, a work which he performed with distinguished ability and courage, Leeds had become the principal battle-ground of the conflict. At the election of 1847, therefore, this question assumed in that town a very important position, and it was deemed a matter of great moment to select as a candidate one who, while he was thoroughly sound on that principle, would in other respects command the confidence and awaken the enthusiasm of the advanced liberal party. Mr. Sturge was held to combine these qualifications above any other public man known to the constituency. In compliance with an invitation from a committee appointed to nominate suitable representatives for the borough, he attended a general meeting of the liberal electors, and, after having explained his sentiments, a resolution was passed, with but one dissentient, pledging those present, in the event of his becoming candidate, to use their utmost exertions to secure his return. But faithful to his own principle as a friend of the unrepresented classes, Mr. Sturge declined to accept the candidateship unless an opportunity were afforded him of ascertaining the opinions of the *people*, who in his judgment were unjustly deprived

of their political rights. A public meeting of the inhabitants, electors, and non-electors was accordingly called in the Cloth Hall Yard, where he was received and adopted as the popular candidate with great enthusiasm. Of course voluntary education formed but one item of no great prominence in the thoroughly liberal creed which Mr. Sturge avowed and embodied in a very able address to the electors, which, after the preliminary measures we have described, he consented to issue. But this, like his former candidatesships, ended in defeat, though in the present instance a very honourable defeat. His rivals—Messrs. Marshall and Beckett—were men of great wealth and local influence, and yet he polled no fewer than 1,976 votes. He had little hope of success from the first, and accepted the contest merely as a matter of principle. In writing to Mr. Tappan, under date of June 17, 1847, he says :—

'I send herewith a "Leeds Mercury" newspaper, from which thou wilt see that I have been induced again to launch on the agitated ocean of political life. I believe under the circumstances I could not have taken another course with an easy mind, and I am thankful to say that in attending public meetings from day to day in contemplation of a contested election, I have been preserved in a degree of calmness that I could hardly have hoped for; and it has afforded me such an opportunity for the public announcement of great principles as of itself is an ample compensation for the time and labour it has occupied. It is also a most cheering circumstance to see how the people respond to great Christian principles, and especially to that of peace. The motives for strenuous opposition to my return are so strong, that it is at least very doubtful if I succeed; and if I am returned, my position will be such a responsible one that I hardly dare contemplate it. But if it is my right place and I am preserved in a right state of mind, strength will, no doubt, be afforded sufficient for the day.'

After it was over, he writes again :—

'I send thee papers which, if thou think it worth thy while to read them, will give thee a little idea of the proceedings on such occasions in this country, as well as explain to thee the combination of influences which succeeded in placing me at the bottom of the poll, but with an amount of public enthusiasm in my favour as made defeat a triumph.'

Mr. Sturge was on several subsequent occasions invited to offer himself as a candidate for parliament. But he firmly, and without hesitation, declined all such invitations, and was wont to say, in the latter years of his life, that he deemed it one of the things for which he had to be thankful to Providence that he had failed to get into the House of Commons. It may be doubted, perhaps, whether he had the qualifications to shine much in that stormy arena. But we cannot conceive of any assembly in which his high character and pure patriotism would not have commanded respect and acquired influence.

CHAPTER XVI.

PHILANTHROPY NOT FORGOTTEN IN POLITICS.

Did not neglect his Philanthropic Objects during the Suffrage Movement—Fidelity to the Cause of the Slave—Conference called at Paris by French Abolitionists—Letter of Mr. W. Forster—Mr. Sturge goes—The French Government forbids the Meeting—Refuses M. Guizot's Hospitality—Second Anti-Slavery Convention—His Anxiety and Labour to make it Successful—Letters to Mr. Tappan and Mr. Whittier—Convention held at Freemasons' Hall—First Peace Convention—Originated by Mr. Sturge—The Care of it devolves upon him—Letters of Miss Sturge—Held at Freemasons' Tavern—Anxieties in Business at the Time—Continued Interest in West Indian Affairs—Correspondence with Missionaries—His high Estimation of their Character—Letter from Rev. John Clark—Watches intently the Progress of American Abolitionism—Extensive Correspondence with Friends there—Action respecting Texas—Letters from Mr. Whittier and Mr. Jay.

It must not, however, be supposed that, even in the most absorbing moments of the political agitation in which he had become involved, Mr. Sturge ever forgot or neglected the great philanthropic interests to which so large a portion of his earlier life had been devoted. He was not one of those men of mere impulse, who mount and ride a particular hobby with great vehemence for a while, and then gradually cool down into indifference, or turn aside to go in quest of some novel speculation or pursuit that may have fascinated their fancy. He possessed, on the contrary, a singular tenacity of purpose. To enter upon a new course of usefulness did not, in his case, imply any desertion of the old. It is, indeed, very touching to observe how

he contrived to make almost all forms of public activity, in which he ever bore part, subserve, in some way or other, the cause of his poor black clients. When in early life he became a member of the political union, he used his influence with that body to send a petition to parliament, to which a very large number of signatures was attached, for the abolition of slavery. We have seen how he did not shrink from resisting all the power of the League, when he thought it was taking a course unjust to the slave. And when he was in the thick of the suffrage movement, he induced his colleagues to join him in an address to the democratic party in America, pointing out to them how seriously liberal principles were dishonoured and impeded in Europe by republican complicity with slavery in the United States. Mr. Whittier in a letter to him, dated 28th of 2nd mo. 1845, says: 'I notice with pleasure that the Complete Suffrage Committee have prepared an address to the democratic party in this country, on their subserviency to the slave power. Everything of that kind helps us. The better portion of that party are beginning to take abolition ground.'

But it was not merely by such incidental methods as these that Mr. Sturge continued in that season of political excitement to serve the anti-slavery cause. By the wonderful faculty for hard work which he possessed, he managed to devote as much attention and energy to it even then as most men of business would have deemed quite enough to occupy all the time they could spare for public and philanthropic objects. To some of his services in this direction we must now return.

In the early part of 1842, the French abolitionists determined to hold a conference and public meeting at Paris, with a view, more especially, to promote the

extinction of slavery in the French colonies. A letter written on their behalf by the Duke de Broglie, was sent to many of the anti-slavery societies in this country, asking them to appoint delegates to attend the proposed convention. Mr. Sturge was, of course, one of those appointed. He may probably have at first hesitated about going, doubtful how far he could be of any use, owing to his ignorance of the French language. But the following letter from his friend, Mr. William Forster, of Norwich, for whom he cherished a respect amounting to reverence, no doubt decided him. It is very interesting, as showing the extreme importance which the writer attached to the maintenance of the *pacific* principle, in connection with the anti-slavery movement, as well as the high estimate he had formed of his friend's firmness of character and loyalty to his own convictions.

'Earlham Road, Norwich: 2nd month, 13th, 1842.

'MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have not heard with any degree of certainty, of a single individual likely to attend the proposed Anti-slavery Conference at Paris. Of course, I am entirely ignorant of thy intentions, but I cannot be satisfied without writing thee a short and hasty letter by this evening's post, just to say that it will be much of a relief to me to find that thou art given up to the service. I can always write to thee in perfect freedom and confidence, and in the openness which subsists between us, I wish to say that on this important occasion, I feel very anxious for the right upholding of the great principle on which our Anti-slavery Society is founded. *Moral*, *religious*, and *pacific* is our motto; it forms the basis of our constitution, and it is much to be desired that it should be kept constantly in view by those who go to represent the great body of British abolitionists in that assembly. I know of nobody who takes a more decided view on this point than thyself; therefore, I cannot but be desirous that the delegation may not be deprived of thy counsel and assistance. Do not

be discouraged as to thy ignorance of the language, for notwithstanding thou mayest not have a word of French, *that* need not prevent thee from being of the most essential service to the cause, and who knows to what degree thou mayst be helpful in keeping others up to the mark.

'It may not be within the province of our committee in New Broad Street to dictate to the associations in the country; they must, I believe, be left to form their own minutes or resolutions in their own language, on the appointment of their delegates. But I very much wish that the minute of our own committee in London may introduce a clause – no matter how short—that shall fully recognise our great principle. I also hope that those who go will not be backward in maintaining and advocating the position which the society has held from its origin, that much and deeply as we deplore the African Slave Trade, and heartily as we abominate all its cruelty and wickedness, we entertain no hope for the extermination of the slave trade but by the extinction of slavery itself, and that whenever, and so long as slavery exists—so long as man is regarded as a chattel, an article of sale and barter—a *thing* subject to inheritance and bequest, there will be, and there *must* be, a slave trade.

'It will, I think, be wisdom in our Anti-slavery friends to keep themselves entirely distinct from the question pending between Great Britain and France, in reference to the right of search, &c. It so much entrenches upon what we consider to be comprehended in the term "pacific," and goes so far towards giving countenance to the employment of an armed force for the suppression of the slave trade, that we cannot, I believe, as an Anti-slavery body, take any part in it; and I cannot but wish we may keep it out of the columns of the "Reporter."

'Thou must forgive me, my dear friend, if I am too urgent upon thee, for I do feel a very strong desire that the conference may not suffer from the want of thy steady and manly adherence to principle, and thy thorough-going straightforwardness.

'I am, thy truly affectionate friend,

'Wm. Forster.'

In company with a considerable number of other gentlemen from various parts of the United Kingdom, Mr. Sturge duly presented himself in the French metropolis at the beginning of March. Great interest had been excited in this country in reference to the meeting at Paris, not merely because it might have an important bearing on the anti-slavery cause, but because it promised to initiate among our neighbours that system of moral agitation which had been productive of such large and salutary results among ourselves. Unhappily, however, the foreign delegates found on their arrival that the French Government had taken alarm, and, although the meeting had been convened under the auspices of such names as De Broglie, Odillon Barrot, Lamartine, Passy, De Tracy, G. Lafayette, &c., it was peremptorily forbidden by the ministry. There was, however, a private conference attended by some sixty or seventy gentlemen, at which a good deal of information was given on the results of emancipation in the West Indies, as well as on the state of the anti-slavery question generally in various parts of the world. M. Guizot, who was then at the head of the Government, evidently half ashamed of the interdict he had thought himself bound to impose on a meeting assembled for such purposes, tried to make up by personal courtesies for the ungraciousness of his public conduct. He invited the foreign delegates to dine with him. Most of them accepted the invitation. But Mr. Sturge, indignant, and perhaps a little contemptuous at the moral cowardice of the man, who did not dare to allow a number of philanthropists to meet, to discuss a question of pure benevolence in the capital of a country professing to enjoy the blessings of a constitutional government, declined to share his hospitality.

In the early part of 1843, whilst in the thick of the suffrage agitation, Mr. Sturge had to devote a large measure of time and attention to two important meetings about to be held in London in the summer of that year, namely, the Second Anti-slavery Convention, and the First Peace Convention. The Anti-slavery Convention of 1840 had been so eminently successful in attracting the attention of the civilised world to the cause of the enslaved, and in giving a fresh impulse to the exertions of those who were working for emancipation, that it was resolved to hold a second meeting of a similar nature in 1843. As on the former occasion, much of the preliminary work, in the way of counsel and correspondence, devolved upon Mr. Sturge. He writes to Mr. Lewis Tappan so early as June 1842 :—

'My dear Friend,—Although, in addition to my other engagements, I have been put in nomination for the representation of Nottingham, as a sort of personification of "complete suffrage," I do not like for the packet to sail without writing a few lines. Thou wilt see that the time for the Anti-slavery conference is announced for June 1843, at Exeter Hall. If life and health permit, I trust thou wilt be there. The accounts of the state of the cause in your land are encouraging, and I hope that you will be able again to start the "Reporter." I am glad to find there is so general a disposition in the Northern States to oppose the annexation of Texas. I fear we can do little to help you on this side of the water till we get a thorough reform in parliament, and the recent disclosures in the House of Commons have done much to prepare the way for this. Such is the state of things in the present House, that we cannot get a member properly qualified to bring forward the East India question this session.

'The Philadelphia "Friends," in their Meeting for Sufferings, have remonstrated with our friends in England on account of the letter I addressed to the society when at New York. The society here, however, have but little sympathy

with such a state of things as prevails there, and the reading of this remonstrance, with some remarks I was allowed to make afterwards, have, I believe, helped our Anti-slavery cause on this side the water.

'I hope we shall shortly get out a circular in reference to the call of the Convention for 1843, and that we shall take care to be so definite, that no possible mistake can be pleaded as to those who shall be entitled to a seat in it. It has also been resolved to hold a peace convention at the same time.

'Very sincerely thy affectionate friend,

'JOSEPH STURGE.'

And even at Nottingham itself, while in the thick of the election, he finds time to write to Mr. Whittier on the same subject. In a letter, dated 'Nottingham, August 2, 1842,' he says:—

'I am favoured with thy welcome letter of the 13th of last month. I know thou wilt excuse my sending a very brief reply, when I tell thee we are on the eve of the long-delayed Nottingham election. The nomination takes place on the 4th and the polling on the 5th inst. My opponent is John Walter, the principal proprietor of the 'Times' newspaper, who, in addition to his own great wealth and the influence and almost unlimited wealth of the aristocratic party, has at his command a paper, perhaps the most extensively circulated and of the greatest influence in the world. Yet such is the state of popular feeling here, that it is yet doubtful if John Walter will go to the poll, and it seems to be generally admitted that the only chance his party have of a majority is by the most extensive bribery, which they cannot now resort to without imminent risk of being detected, and their candidate losing his seat.

'I am glad to have so cheering an account of the aspect of your Anti-slavery cause, and though the struggle in which I am engaged here in favour of the suffrage so occupies my time that I cannot give so much as I wish to the old cause, yet I believe if we once carry a measure of complete repre-

sentation in this country, that few things will more promote the downfall of slavery throughout the world. I find from Lewis Tappan they have already appointed six deputies to the Convention here next year. I am glad of this, as it will stimulate others to do the same. Perhaps your society can ere long appoint a deputation, and of course I depend upon thy being one. Our cause wears, at present, a gloomy aspect in France, and our Tory Government in this country is, of course, a drag upon our wheel; and we are a good deal alarmed as to what may be the consequence of the measure just passed to sanction the importation of hill coolies to the Mauritius.'

Again, writing to the same friend, January 3, 1843, he strongly urges him to attend the Anti-slavery and Peace Conventions:—

'I am particularly anxious,' he says, 'that each of your free States should be represented on this important occasion, and I hope thou wilt leave no effort untried to secure the appointment of such friends and delegates as thou wilt consider a real help and strength to our cause by their presence. . . . I am very much pleased to hear that the gallows system is abolished in Vermont, and that you hope to follow their example. My friend John Barry, the untiring advocate of that cause here, has lost by death his right-hand help—Sydney Taylor, an able writer in one of our daily papers—and his own health is much shattered by his great exertions, but I know he will be much rejoiced to hear what you are doing.'

The Anti-slavery Convention was held at Freemasons' Hall, beginning on June 13, and extending over nearly a week; upwards of 300 delegates attended. It is not necessary to dwell at any length on the proceedings of this meeting, as they very much resembled those of the previous Convention in 1840. Perhaps its most distinctive feature was a long and animated debate which took place on the question of introducing

slave-grown sugar into the British market, which the former Convention had unanimously condemned, but which the progress of the free trade agitation had since then brought before public attention in a more pressing and practical form. A resolution was proposed by the Rev. Thomas Spencer to revoke the judgment of 1840, and was ably supported by Mr. Anstie, Mr. Cobden, Mr. Miall, and others; but as strenuously resisted by Mr. Blair, Mr. E. N. Buxton, Mr. Scoble, Mr. Sturge, &c. Ultimately, to avoid dividing the Convention, the subject was disposed of by the previous question.

In noticing Mr. Sturge's visit to America in 1841, we remarked that one of the objects he had in view was to promote the cause of international peace. There were sundry questions at that time pending between our Government and that of the United States, in respect to which he felt great solicitude lest they should lead to a breach of friendly relations. He was anxious, moreover, to promote more active cooperation between the friends of peace in England and America, in the hope that their united efforts might be of some service in calling the attention of the Christian world to the infinite evils attending the custom of war, and the duty and practicability of adopting such measures as might tend to diminish the frequency of war, and ultimately, by God's blessing, lead to its abolition. With this view he entered into earnest communication with some of the leading friends of the cause in America, especially Dr. Channing and the Honourable William Jay. He was deeply interested in a plan for the preservation of international peace submitted to him by the latter gentleman, which has become familiar enough since then, but which, we believe, Mr. Jay had the merit of

first suggesting. His proposal was, that any two nations, entering into alliance, should embody in their treaty a clause, mutually binding them to refer any dispute or difficulty that may arise between them to the arbitration of one or more friendly powers. To afford Mr. Sturge a further opportunity of conferring with those interested in the peace question, the American Peace Society convened a meeting of members of that society, and other influential gentlemen, which was held at Boston on July 29, 1841. The following minute, handed to him by the gentleman who officiated as secretary, will explain the proceedings :—

'The meeting was called for the purpose of meeting Mr. Joseph Sturge from England, and there were present most of the active members of the American Peace Society.

'Amasa Walker, Esq., was chosen chairman, and J. P. Blanchard secretary.

'Mr. Sturge addressed the meeting, and suggested the expediency of calling, at some future time, a convention of the friends of peace, of different nations, to deliberate upon the best method of adjusting international disputes; and offered, for the consideration of the meeting, a plan proposed by Judge Jay, in which all the friends of peace could unite.

'The meeting was then addressed by several gentlemen, who cordially approved the plan proposed, and subsequently the following resolutions were unanimously adopted :

'Resolved—That this meeting receives with great pleasure the suggestion of our friend Joseph Sturge of England, of a general conference of the friends of peace, at the earliest practicable opportunity, in London, to consult on the measures that are best adapted to promote universal peace among the nations of the earth ; and they respectfully refer the subject to the executive of the London Peace Society for their decision, on correspondence and consultation with the friends of the cause in this and other countries.

'Resolved—That the suggestion of Judge Jay, of the in-

sertion of a clause in all conventional treaties between nations, mutually binding the parties to submit all international disputes, during the continuance of such treaties, to the arbitration of some one or more friendly powers, presents a definite and practicable object of effort worthy of the serious attention of the friends of peace. And this meeting recommends to the friends of the cause in different countries to petition their respective Governments in favour of the measure.'

On his return to England, Mr. Sturge submitted these resolutions to the Committee of the London Peace Society, who, after a preliminary conference of the friends of the society, held in London in May 1842, determined to call such a convention as was recommended by the Boston resolutions. The arrangements for this meeting became a matter of much anxiety to Mr. Sturge, for, just at the time when the necessary preparations had to be made, the secretary of the London Society, the Rev. N. M. Harry, suddenly died. By this painful event, the responsibility of the conference seemed to devolve almost entirely upon him, at whose instance it had been undertaken, and that at a moment when he was already distracted with so many other cares public and private. In Miss Sturge's letters there are frequent references to this point:—

'If Joseph,' she says, in one of them, 'had not still greater weight more closely pressing upon him, he would be feeling anxious about the prospects of the Peace Convention; there is so much danger of its proving a failure for want of some one at the helm.'

Again, writing to the same friend, she says:—

'My present object in writing is to consult thee about the Peace Convention. No person has yet appeared able and willing to take in hand the conduct of the meeting. . . . Do

cast about thee to think of some person competent to this work. His heart should be in the cause; he should be perfectly sound in principle, and gifted with the power of managing men with their own consent. This latter, thou wilt perhaps say, is something Utopian; but is not some portion of this ability necessary to all leaders?'

Happily, the attention of the committee was directed in time to the Rev. John Jefferson, who afterwards became the secretary of the Society, and who conducted the affairs of the conference with great judgment and ability. It was held at the Freemasons' Tavern on the 22nd of June, and the two following days. Mr. Charles Hindley, M.P., was elected as president, and the following gentlemen as vice-presidents:—Joseph Brotherton, Esq., M.P., Joseph Sturge, John Tappan (of Boston, U.S.), the Marquis de la Rochefoucauld Liancourt, Amasa Walker, and Thomas Cock, M.D. Many valuable papers were presented, discussing the question of peace and war in its various aspects, and the meeting proved on the whole satisfactory and successful. 'The Peace Convention,' says Miss Sturge, 'was lively, and full of interest.'

It is impossible not to be struck with the simple and self-forgetting earnestness with which this admirable brother and sister devoted themselves to doing good, as others do to the pursuit of wealth, fame, or fashion. The amount of labour through which Mr. Sturge passed at this period of his life was something marvellous. His correspondence alone would have sufficed to occupy the time and attention of an ordinary man. But he was, besides, constantly attending meetings, committees, conferences, on the suffrage, anti-slavery, and peace questions, and travelling extensively in various parts of the kingdom in promotion of these and other objects.

And if anything could add to our surprise and admiration at his extraordinary energy, it is the fact now disclosed in his sister's letters, that in the very crisis of these public exertions, the commercial firm of which he was the head was suddenly involved in one of those terrible squalls to which, at that time, the corn trade was so peculiarly liable. His brother, who, as much as possible, was willing to spare him all the anxieties of business that he might more thoroughly devote himself to those public interests dear to the heart of both, was no longer able to weather the storm alone:—

'During the last few months,' writes Miss Sturge, under date of Dec. 1, 1842, 'Joseph and Charles have been losing money with far more rapidity than they ever gained it. Charles, alarmed by the suddenness of the emergency, was obliged hastily to recall Joseph from Scotland, and since then it has been a continued struggle with stupendous difficulties. They have not probably quite reached the bottom yet; but the way seems clearer than it was, and I am comforted to observe that both of them have now regained a stronger tone of mind. Under such circumstances, there are not many besides Joseph that could pay attention to other affairs than his own. But excepting now and then, when body and mind were almost exhausted, he has not relaxed his exertions in those causes which are dear to him.'

Then she passes away from these private anxieties, to beg her friend to assist them in finding some person 'able and willing to take in hand the conduct of the Peace Convention.' We cannot doubt, indeed, that this unselfish devotion to great objects was its own reward. It presented a most salutary diversion from those private cares which otherwise, by incessant brooding upon them, might have eaten into the soul as doth a canker. A generous sympathy for others' weal is often the best balm for our own bruise.

It is probable, indeed, that the severest part of the trial to Mr. Sturge and his sister was the obligation it imposed upon them to check the flow of charity which it was their delight to indulge. Miss Sturge, writing to her friend, who was then raising a subscription to meet some emergency in the case of a West India missionary, says :—

'Joseph and I have been this morning talking over the matter of J. R., and although we have not fully determined the means, we have, I think, decided to furnish thee somehow or other with the balance of the sum thou art desirous to remit. Joseph's own resources are so diminished, that he has to consider how the one pound he must now give, instead of the ten pounds he was wont to give, may be best applied. If tempted to regret anything about the late election it is the cost of it, which, though it was managed in many respects with scrupulous economy, yet after all falls heavily upon crippled means. I do not say this to discourage thee, my dear friend, but to excuse our delay and contrivance. Yet even at this moment, when it would have been so peculiarly congenial to Joseph's feelings to have given more liberally, I see, and believe that he does also, more clearly than ever the blessing of having been so stripped.'

But the public labours of Mr. Sturge, extensive as they were, very imperfectly represent his services, especially to the cause of the negro. It is difficult, indeed, without swelling this memoir to undue proportions, to give the reader any adequate idea of what he was doing in this respect, month by month, and almost day by day, through a long succession of years. He maintained a constant and elaborate correspondence with the leading missionaries in the West Indies, so long as they and he lived, with Knibb, and Burchell, and Phillippo, and Oughton, and Clark, and Ketley, and others. He had visited these men in the scene of

their labours, and knew well the moral heroism they had displayed in protecting the rights and in toiling for the moral elevation of a despised and down-trodden race. And ever after he held them in the highest estimation; and when in 1840 he took the chair at a great meeting held in Exeter Hall, to give a public welcome to Mr. Knibb on his arrival in England, he bore an emphatic testimony to their character. They had been charged with being too political, and this was his reply to the charge:—

'I am one of those who have never been able to see that a Christian was not equally bound to discharge his political as his religious duties. We read that the advent of Him whose doctrine all missionaries preach, and whose example they profess to follow, was ushered in by the anthem of peace on earth and goodwill towards men. He beautifully united, in his own life, attention to the temporal and the spiritual wants and maladies of those by whom He was surrounded; and if ever there was an instance in which the Divine blessing rested upon an endeavour to imitate this example—making due allowance for the weakness and inferiority of all human instruments—it is to be found in the field of Baptist missionary labour in Jamaica.'

It was his delight, therefore, to cheer these brave men on amid their labours and sufferings, not only by his sympathy, advice, and encouragement, but by freely opening his purse to aid them in their efforts for the improvement of the coloured peasantry, and by interposing the shield of his influence between them and their enemies and detractors. Piles of his letters to them, extending from 1837 to 1859, the year of his death, now lie before us, showing with what unabated interest he followed the varying fortunes of the colonies, and with what combined wisdom and kindness he aided

and counselled and comforted the missionaries. Rather, however, than give lengthy extracts from these letters, the biographer will permit one of the missionaries themselves, the Rev. John Clark, whom Mr. Sturge not only honoured as a faithful minister of Christ, but loved as a friend, to speak for the rest. After describing the horrors of the apprenticeship system, Mr. Clark goes on:—

'You may therefore imagine the joy with which we heard of the intended visit of Mr. Sturge and his associates towards the close of 1836, to enquire into the working of the apprenticeship.

'On February 2, 1837, I had the happiness of welcoming Joseph Sturge and his esteemed companion, Thomas Harvey, to my house. It was a relief to my burdened heart to pour out to them all I knew and thought and felt of the horrible apprenticeship. Never can I forget Mr. Sturge expressing his hope that it would be abolished. This far exceeded all I ventured to anticipate. Much I thought might be done to mitigate its cruelties, but I never imagined that the British Government, still less the colonial legislatures, would abolish the system one day sooner than the law had fixed for its termination. I had not learnt the resolution, courage, and power that lay under the quiet exterior of Joseph Sturge.

'Mr. Sturge's interest in the welfare of the negro did not cease with his emancipation. He exerted himself successfully to prevent the sanction of the British Government being given to laws passed by the colonial legislatures which would have divested their freedom of its chief advantages. He aided with the loan of a considerable sum of money in the purchase of land for the formation of free villages; he assisted largely in the establishment and carrying on of schools for the education of the young; a female normal school was established and maintained for three years, principally at his expense; when the cholera raged so fearfully throughout this island as to decimate its population, he contributed liberally and obtained the aid of others to meet the expenses incurred in aiding the

sufferers, and in mitigating its calamitous results; an immigration law was passed by our legislature which would have reduced the immigrants to a state of semi-slavery, but it was disallowed by the queen in council, mainly through his efforts and influence. In short, he was ever ready zealously and liberally to cooperate in every effort to promote the temporal and spiritual welfare of his fellow-men. If ever the words of the patriarch were applicable to any man, they were to Joseph Sturge: "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me, and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me, because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor, and the cause which I knew not, I searched out. And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth;" not, however, by physical force, but by the power of truth. Yet, what self-renunciation, what deep humility, what tender compassion, what charity, marked his whole conduct! But it was by the grace of God he was what he was. The Saviour's love was shed abroad in his heart and manifested in his daily life.

'I know not how to speak of Mr. Sturge as a personal friend. His sympathy in trouble, his counsel and aid in every difficulty, his joy in all my happiness, can never be forgotten, nor their blessed influence ever cease to be felt.

'Never did I know anyone with a more sincere and simple faith in Christ. Like every man who thinks for himself, he felt there were mysteries in religion which he could not grasp, but he was sure that in the light of heaven all would be made plain: on the work of the atonement, however, he would speak with great clearness and decision; he renounced all hope of acceptance with God on the ground of good works, trusting in the precious blood of Christ for salvation.

'During my two visits to England I had the privilege of spending some time under his hospitable roof and of holding frequent intercourse with him, and the more intimate the knowledge of his character and conduct, the more one was

compelled to admire and love him. Like Nathaniel, he was "an Israelite indeed, a man without guile." It was impossible to be much with him without observing one trait in his character—his jealousy for the honour of religion. The only occasions on which I ever observed anything like indignation was when the professed disciples of Christ became the advocates or excusers of iniquity. It grieved him to the soul to see or hear the authority of the Saviour whom he loved so fervently brought forward in defence of sin.'

The remarks we have made as respects the West Indies, are no less applicable to the unfaltering interest with which he followed all vicissitudes of the anti-slavery movement in the United States. Here also he maintained a constant correspondence with some of the prominent abolitionists, such as the Hon. W. Jay, Mr. Whittier, and Mr. Lewis Tappan. And it was not merely by sympathy, counsel, and encouragement that he helped the cause, but often also by liberal contributions, of which there are frequent acknowledgments in Mr. Tappan's letters. It was not often that political action of any kind could with advantage be taken in this country bearing upon American slavery. When such occasions, however, occurred, Mr. Sturge left no exertions untried to bring the right influence to bear upon our Government. When in 1840, for instance, the rumour reached him that the liberal administration then in office was about to enter into a commercial treaty with Texas — which had been wrested from Mexico by American fillibusters, in shameless violation of all principles of international law, and avowedly for the purpose of extending the area of slavery—a treaty that would be tantamount to a recognition of its independence, he at once took the alarm. In a letter to Mr. William Forster, dated Nov. 24, 1840, he writes :—

'A few of our friends, including George Stacey, had a little conference this morning respecting Texas, and it was concluded not to take any step until we were in possession of more information on the subject, particularly as regards the conditions of the treaty, and it was thought desirable that J. H. Tredgold and myself should go to the Foreign Office either to-morrow or next day, in the event of not hearing from Lord Palmerston, to obtain, if possible, a copy of the treaty. . . . I have some hope it will not be found so virtual a recognition of Texian independence as would appear from what has been published, for some of the articles, I think, bear evident traces of being drawn up by General Hamilton's party. It is, however, I fear, bad enough, and will require the strongest remonstrance on our part.'

He had already written to Mr. O'Connell, whose vigilance and zeal on all matters connected with the anti-slavery question were beyond impeachment, and immediately received the following reply:—

'Derrynane Abbey: November 24, 1840.

'MY DEAR FRIEND,—I had just made up my mind to write to you upon the subject-matter of your letter—I mean the Texas question—when that letter reached me. I never felt more afflicted upon any political subject than I did at the announcement in the newspapers that Lord Palmerston had entered into a commercial treaty with a nest of land-pirates. Already, he has been upon the very verge of plunging us into all the horrors of war upon the most uninteresting of all possible grounds, that is, which of two barbarians shall misgovern, for each of them would misgovern, the unhappy inhabitants of Syria. We have escaped (if we *have* escaped) all the crimes of war, by the king of the French wisely submitting to the humiliation of the Syrian arrangement being made without his concurrence. In the meantime our natural alliance with France is broken off; the French people are insulted and irritated, and will, the first opportunity, seek means of revenge. . . . . There is no occasion to write to

Lord Palmerston or anybody else with respect to the effect of making that treaty. It is a direct recognition of the independence, as a state, of the Texians. That state is as much recognised by this treaty as France or the United States. It is admitted into the comity of nations. Their ambassador would have a right to be presented to our queen, and we of course will have a diplomatic agent in one of the "shantys" of what is called the city of Houston.

'Believe me,

'Respectfully and faithfully yours,

'Daniel O'Connell.'

It appears, however, that the Whig ministry was overturned before the treaty could be ratified, for we find Mr. Sturge writing to Mr. Tappan, October 10, 1841:—

'Thou wilt be highly gratified with the annexed particulars of our interview with Lord Aberdeen. It is very encouraging to find that the Texan treaty is not yet ratified. It is, in my opinion, of great importance that this fact should be published far and wide.'

The American gentlemen we have named above were eminently competent to keep him well instructed, not only with regard to the facts, but the philosophy of the anti-slavery agitation in the United States. Indeed, out of this correspondence a pretty complete history might be written, if it were our business to write it, of the struggles, reverses, and triumphs of the cause in America during the last twenty years. The most salient fact these letters reveal is the steady progress it made in the face of all opposition. His correspondents have often to bewail the apathy of the churches, the unfaithfulness of the clergy, the time-serving of leading politicians, and the subserviency of congress to the slave-holding power. In spite of all, however, their cry

ever is, with the persecuted Galileo—'*It moves for all that.*'

We shall venture on a very few extracts here, illustrative of this statement. Mr. Whittier, in October 1843, says:—

'The anti-slavery cause has never been more rapidly gaining strength than at this time. Our Conventions during the last three months in various sections have been larger than usual, and full of enthusiasm and courage. . . . There is now an almost perfect unanimity in the anti-slavery ranks as to the expediency of independent political action. Judge Jay, S. M. Gates, member of Congress for New York, and our excellent friend, Lewis Tappan, are now with us on this point openly and decidedly. . . . Heaven bless O'Connell for his noble speech on American slavery at the Irish Repeal meeting. It was the blow of a giant, well-directed and terrible in its execution, as Bruce's battle-axe at Bannockburn. . . . Hast thou read in our papers the triumphal processions which everywhere greeted John Quincey Adams in his late journey through the State of New York? Never yet was a private citizen more honoured by men of all parties and sects. At the city of New York, Albany, Rochester, Utica, Buffalo, and other places, the whole population turned out to welcome him, and do homage to the man who has so defended liberty. Admiration has been extorted from the bitterest enemies of emancipation. . . . It is some consolation to feel that, the opposition of Friends and other sects notwithstanding, the cause of the poor slave is gaining daily a deep hold upon that Christian sympathy which breaks over all sectarian prejudices and restrictions, and, like the Samaritan, stoops even to heal the wounded Jew. Blessed of our heavenly Father, the cause will triumph over every obstacle.'

In 1844, he writes:—

'We have very cheering accounts of the progress of our cause in Virginia and Kentucky. Thou remembers, of course, our little meeting in Wilmington (Del.) with some of the

friends of emancipation. The seed then sown is now, I understand, beginning to spring up. By a letter from there I learn that vigorous, but of course cautious and carefully-directed efforts are now making in that State to redeem it from the curse of slavery; and from my knowledge of the men engaged in it I hope much from the movement. In Maryland the 'Visitor,' a paper published in Baltimore, in sight of Slaughter's slave-den, has opened its columns to anti-slavery writings, and has published several excellent articles.'

In 1846, he writes again :—

'The vote for liberty in Massachusetts is this year, as near as I can gather it from the returns, a little rising 10,000, a gain of about 20 per cent. We have elected six members of the State Legislature. This is not as well as I hoped. But the now dominant party (the Whigs) have been compelled by the rising tide of abolition to move with it, and some of their leading men are almost with us. Among them are Charles Adams,* son of the ex-president, and Charles Sumner, a young lawyer of great promise, who has signalised himself as the ardent friend of peace and the abolition of capital punishments.'

In 1848 he writes :—

'I trust the American papers have kept thee informed of the progress of things here. The adhesion of ex-president Van Buren, once a decided opponent to the liberty platform, bringing with him a host of able and influential men, the very flower of the democratic party, is an event of signal importance. Our vote will be more than four-fold what it was last year, unless I greatly miscalculate. The enclosed report of the Pennsylvania and Delaware Society gives a condensed and unexaggerated picture of the state of things in this country as respects the slavery question. The discussion has penetrated into all the slave states—Kentucky, Missouri, Maryland, and Virginia are moving. A Free-soil

* Now Minister of the United States in London.

Association has been formed in the district of Columbia. Delaware will, I trust, be a free state this winter. . . . If thou couldst be here now, I know it would gladden thy heart to witness the great change that has taken place. Instead of a few abolitionists here and there, as when thou wert here, the whole community is discussing the question. I am filled with thankfulness in view of the great moral revolution.'

And even in 1851, immediately after the passing of the Fugitive Slave Law, Mr. Jay writes as if that great wickedness itself had been for the furtherance of the cause :—

'You will know what a mighty effort has been made by our Northern traders in Southern votes and merchandise, under the leadership of Daniel Webster, to roll back the anti-slavery tide. To a certain extent they have succeeded. The commercial interest in the great towns, through a rivalry for the Southern trade, has professed great alacrity in slave-catching, and political aspirants for office under the Federal Government find it expedient to make slave-hunting the text of patriotism. But the religious feeling of the community, that is, of those who are not preeminently "gentlemen of property and standing," is shocked by the enormous cruelty and injustice of the Fugitive Law. To overcome this feeling, which in its demonstrations is exceedingly inconvenient to our merchants and office-seekers, the clergy have been urged by the press and other agencies to come out in support of the law. Some pastors, who preach in fine churches to rich and fashionable city congregations, have complied. But notwithstanding the great pressure, only a few of the *chief* priests have made common cause with the Pharisees in exalting the authority of an Act of Congress over the commands of God. As far as I can learn, they do not exceed two or three dozen. The rebuke which these reverend time-servers have just received from their English brethren will, I hope, do them good. Multitudes of our *country* clergy have, in a manner worthy of their office, counselled, not resistance, but disobedience, to this most wicked law.'

And so we might proceed with these extracts to a much larger extent, all tending to show that the tide of Christian sentiment was rising steadily year by year, and must ultimately, though by comparatively slow degrees, cause the ark of liberty to float high above all obstacles on the American Continent. What deep gratification this afforded to Mr. Sturge may be readily imagined. Again and again does he, in his letters written during the time of the Russian war, describe himself as turning away sickened from that spectacle of blood, to contemplate the progress of what he hoped and believed would prove one of the most glorious illustrations in the history of the world of the power of the weapons that are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of the strongholds of iniquity.

Alas! for the change. 'But the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.'

CHAPTER XVII.

DEATH OF HIS SISTER—EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

Sophia Sturge—Her Character—Her Devotion to her Brother—Extracts from her Letters—Her Illness—And Death—Letter from Mr. Sturge on the Occasion—His second Marriage—Mr. Whittier's Lines on Miss Sturge's Death—The Evangelical Alliance—Its Object and Constitution—Mr. Sturge remonstrates with Rev. J. A. James on its Test-Creed—Mr. James's Reply—The Question of Slavery before the Alliance—First Invitation to America contained no Reference to the Question—The Birmingham Resolution—Embarrassment of the American Delegates—Their Protest against any Reference to Slavery—Exciting Discussion at the Conference—The Compromise adopted—Unsatisfactory and unsuccessful—Sorrow of the English and American Abolitionists—Letters from Mr. Whittier.

In the year 1845, Mr. Sturge was called upon to sustain one of the severest afflictions that befel him in life. We have had occasion, in the preceding narrative, repeatedly to refer to his sister, Sophia Sturge. With the exception of the brief interval between his marriage and the death of his first wife, a period of rather less than a year, she had been his inseparable companion for nearly twenty-five years. From the concurrent testimony of those best acquainted with her, she appears to have been a woman of rare strength and excellence of character. In a short tribute to her memory which appeared in one of the Birmingham journals at the time of her death, from the pen, we believe, of the Rev. John Angell James, she is thus described:—

'Never, perhaps, were the active and passive virtues of the Christian character more harmoniously and beautifully blended than in this most excellent woman. To a temper and disposition singularly sweet and engaging, she united a vigorous intellect and an understanding universally well informed. Her Christianity was vital and practical, diffusing its benign and heavenly influence throughout every action of her life—a life that was constantly devoted to the prosecution of some project of active benevolence and usefulness. She occupied and worthily filled a most important station as the colleague, counsellor, and ever-ready helper of her distinguished brother, in all his vast designs of beneficence. She not only presided in his family and relieved him of domestic cares, but she entered with earnest and enlightened interest into all his views, and by her intelligence and method greatly aided him in keeping himself informed of the progress of events in all their details. Her sound judgment and Christian wisdom were as a staff on which he could lean with assured confidence.'

Her affection for her brother, as she acknowledged on her death-bed, had something of idolatry in it. To say that she sympathised with him in all his public aspirations and efforts is to say little. She absolutely identified herself with him, and lived in his life. 'He was the ocean to the river of her thoughts.' She did this, however, not as a matter of mere passionate and unreasoning devotion to him personally. She had sufficient vigour of mind intelligently to appreciate his principles and plans, while her spirit, at once benevolent and devout, was so entirely in unison with his that all the ardour and energy of her life flowed naturally, as it were, into the channel of his existence. While he was walking in the perilous path of political excitement she watched over him with the trembling tenderness of a mother, fully approving, indeed, the course that he took, yet deeply anxious lest his spiritual character

should sustain detriment. Very touchingly do these feelings reveal themselves in some of her letters to her friend, Mr. Thomas Harvey, now before us:—

'I see,' she says, 'the danger of my brother's situation, and have often been visited with doubts whether he ought to be thus engaged; but when I have been almost arriving at the conclusion that he should withdraw, some striking exhibition of the power with which he is enabled to meet one or another trying exigency, gives such evidence of the preserving tender care of his gracious Master, that knowing, as I do, his sincere desire to follow His guidance, I cannot believe that he is, or will be, left to the dictates of his own erring will. . . . . I have an unshaken conviction that the cause is righteous, and whilst it is the reproach of all men there seems less to fear for its advocates—a season of popularity, should that ever arrive, would be the time of danger. I think Joseph is becoming less sensitive (I do not say hardened) by the reproach of his friends. I was delighted to meet his bright countenance in the lobby after Meeting last 4th day, after hearing a sermon which all must perceive was intended to reprove him.'

And again, when the storm of censure was at its highest, she writes:—

'As Richard Barrett remarked to me when he was here, Joseph is not *now* in danger from the praise of tongues. The approbation of a few thinking men seems for the present the only counterpoise to the asperities, persecutions, and indifference of other parties. But hard as the coldness, and sometimes bitterness, of friends are to bear, it is the needful preparation for *dangerous* service, and not to be spared by a tender Father, who "chastens whom he loves;" and the prayer of our heart is, that love and meekness may be granted in proportion to the accumulated load of calumny and reproach.'

It would be difficult to overrate the value to Mr.

Sturge of having such a counsellor in his own home, so intelligent and earnest in her sympathies with him, and yet so 'jealous over him with a godly jealousy,' lest he should err from the straight path of duty.

But this dear companion through so large a portion of the pilgrimage of life, he was now destined to lose. From the beginning of 1845 we find in his letters occasional references to the precarious state of his sister's health, which grow more and more frequent and anxious as the year advances. Early in May he writes thus to Mr. G. W. Alexander :—

'I am sorry to say that I cannot give an improved account of my dear sister's health. It is, however, an unspeakable favour that she can look forward to the probability of a fatal termination of her illness with that peaceful serenity and cheerfulness which a firm, but humble trust in the mercy of God in Christ Jesus can alone impart. I have pretty much resolved not to be from home for a night until I see the result of my sister's illness for life or for death, but if it is very important for me to be at the anti-slavery Meeting, I could come up and return the same evening.'

And a few weeks later, to the same friend :—

'I almost fear thou wilt think that I am hardly taking my share of anti-slavery burdens at this important time, but within the last fortnight my sister has several times been in such a state that I hardly knew, from one minute to another, whether she would survive ; and while she is thus hanging between life and death, not only do I feel it my duty to remain with her, but my anxiety about her and the weakness of my spirits make me little qualified to do anything efficient when I am absent from her.'

Indeed, for many weeks he quitted her room as seldom as possible. As we have already seen, during those hours of precious but mournful communion in

the chamber of death, the brother and sister reviewed together the public and especially the political activities in which she had encouraged him to take part, and, amid many contrite acknowledgments of personal infirmity, felt that their motives and objects bore the scrutiny even of that searching and solemn hour. On the 6th of June the scene closed. In a letter to Mr. Tappan, under date of June 18, 1845, Mr. Sturge writes thus:—

'My dear Friend,—My previous letters would prepare thee for hearing that the spirit of my precious sister left its earthly tabernacle early on the morning of the 6th inst. After the message she sent to thee in my letter of the 16th of last month, thou mayest suppose that I must feel unshaken confidence that she was safely landed in the heavenly Canaan, even had the enemy been, through the increased weakness of her body, permitted afterwards to buffet her much more than he was. The last portion of Scripture read to her was, as she requested, a Psalm of thanksgiving and praise. The 30th was selected ["*I will extol Thee, O Lord; for Thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to rejoice over me,*" &c.] A few hours before her death she was partially delirious, and could say nothing of her spiritual state; but within about an hour of her death, in reply to a question of mine, she said, "Very comfortable." These were the last words she ever uttered, and she passed off so gently that it would be difficult to say the precise time when death took place. From the time that I suspected danger from her illness, I felt it to be my duty, as well as high privilege, to make all other duties give way, that I might be in her sick-chamber, and I was rarely absent from her for many hours together, day or night, for some months before her death, and I hope little was omitted that could be done to mitigate her sufferings, and an examination, since her death, has also proved that no human skill could have arrested the disease. I have also the infinitely higher consolation of knowing from her own lips,

that while she viewed all her own works of righteousness as "filthy rags," she could rest in entire dependence on the mercy of her Saviour. Thou wilt justly say, "Why, then, mourn for her?" Yet I do mourn and weep, and, notwithstanding my many remaining undeserved mercies, the world appears, indeed, a wilderness without her. He who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and who wept at the grave of Lazarus, will, I trust, pity my weakness; and I am thankful to say, that hitherto I have been able to meet the shock with more composure than I dared to anticipate. . . . . I would gladly accept thy kind invitation, contained in thy letter of the 31st, were it right to do so, and there is hardly a human being, I believe, whom it would afford me more consolation to see and converse with; but even if it were right to leave my duties for such a journey, I feel deeply (and it is right I should) that this is a loss for which there is but one adequate relief—trying, through redeeming mercy, to get my own house in order, that when the message of death comes, I may be permitted to follow where she is gone. She wished me to send thee a token of her remembrance; what shall it be? Instead of two, please send me six copies of "The Interior Life," by Upham. Next to the Bible, I believe, it was the greatest consolation to Sophia. I hope I feel as strongly bound to the anti-slavery cause as ever, but I must write of this in my next.

'Very affectionately thy friend,

'Joseph Sturge.'

Mr. Sturge probably felt the loss of his sister more keenly and profoundly than any affliction that he had ever encountered in life. Dark, indeed, must have been his dwelling-place when the light shed upon it by that bright and congenial spirit was withdrawn. Providence, however, was gracious to him again. After an interval of about eighteen months of this domestic desolation, his home was once more made glad by womanly affection and sympathy. On October 14,

1846, he was married to Hannah, youngest daughter of Mr. Barnard Dickinson, of Coalbrookdale. We cannot better close this brief notice of Sophia Sturge than by introducing the following beautiful lines from the pen of Mr. Whittier, entitled,

'TO MY FRIEND, ON THE DEATH OF HIS SISTER.

'Thine is a grief, the depth of which another
May never know;
Yet, o'er the waters, Oh my stricken brother!
To thee I go.

'I lean my heart unto thee, sadly folding
Thy hand in mine;
With even the weakness of my soul upholding
The strength of thine.

'I never knew, like thee, the dear departed;
I stood not by
When, in calm trust, the pure and tranquil-hearted
Lay down to die.

'And on thy ears my words of weak condoling
Must vainly fall;
The funeral bell which in thy heart is tolling
Sounds over all!

'I will not mock thee with the poor world's common
And heartless phrase,
Nor wrong the memory of a sainted woman
With idle praise.

'With silence only as their benediction
God's angels come
Where, in the shadow of a great affliction,
The soul sits dumb!

'Yet would I say what thy own heart approveth:
Our Father's will—
Calling to Him the dear one whom He loveth—
Is mercy still.

'Not upon thee or thine the solemn angel
Hath evil wrought;
Her funeral anthem is a glad evangel—
The good die not!

'God calls our loved ones; but we lose not wholly
What He hath given!
They live on earth, in thought and deed, as truly
As in His heaven.

'And she is with thee; in thy path of trial
She walketh yet;
Still with the baptism of thy self-denial
Her locks are wet.

'Up, then, my brother! lo, the fields of harvest
Lie white in view!
She lives, and loves thee, and the God thou servest
To both is true.

'Thrust in thy sickle! England's toil-worn peasants
Thy call abide;
And she thou mourn'st, a pure and holy presence,
Shall glean beside!'

The memory of such a sister, we may well believe, when he had once recovered from the first shock of grief, far from paralysing his energies, must rather have animated him more than ever to 'patient continuance in well-doing.' Accordingly, we find that not long did he 'sit in the shadow of that great affliction.' In a few months he is again at his post, vigilant, alert, resolute in what he deemed the cause of truth and righteousness on the earth.

The proceedings of the Evangelical Alliance, a body which was constituted in 1846 with a view to promote and express greater visible union between the various bodies of Evangelical Christians in this and all other Protestant countries, engaged Mr. Sturge's attention in a considerable degree. The object in itself was one adapted strongly to attract the sympathies of a nature so liberal and loving as his. But when he came to examine more narrowly the constitution of the proposed alliance, it seemed to him that the good men who were promoting it had fallen into the error with which a certain body of ecclesiastics have been charged, and to

which perhaps all bodies of ecclesiastics are more or less a little prone—a disposition 'to lengthen the creeds, and to shorten the commandments.' This was painfully apparent when comparing the stringency of their doctrinal with the laxity of their moral test. The former was so stringent that no member of the Society of Friends could be admitted, and the latter was so lax that no trafficker in the bodies and souls of our fellowmen need be excluded. On both these points Mr. Sturge felt that he was called upon to make his protest. As respects the creed, which those who should become members were expected to subscribe, it appeared to him that for a union which avowedly professed to include *all evangelical* Christians, the basis adopted was so narrow as to be not only inconsistent with that profession, but to involve something very like a breach of Christian charity. With regard, indeed, to the particular article on which he animadverts below, it looked at first sight as if it had been adopted expressly with a view to shut out the Society of Friends, seeing that they are the only body that questions the validity of the dogmas it affirms. He felt it his duty, therefore, to address a public letter on the subject to his friend and neighbour, the Rev. John Angell James, who, if not the founder of the Alliance, was one of its most earnest and influential supporters. In this document he asked his friend 'candidly to reconsider the following article, which it had been announced was unanimously adopted by the Alliance as one of the articles of belief which all parties must hold who shall be considered worthy to take any part in their future proceedings: "The Divine institution of the Christian ministry, and the authority and perpetuity of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper."'

'This resolution,' continues Mr. Sturge, 'immediately follows one, passed on the same occasion, affirming "The right and duty of private judgment in the interpretation of Holy Scripture." In the exercise of this right it is well known that many persons, after prayerful and earnest examination and enquiry, have arrived at the conclusion that the "authority and perpetuity" of what are called the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are not enjoined by Holy Scripture; and also believe it to be their duty to refrain from the adoption of them in their own practice.

'The grounds for bearing a testimony against the observance of these ordinances were probably never stronger than at the present day, from the undue importance attached to them by some, and the presumptuous confidence in their own salvation evinced by others, who, while holding these ordinances to be essential, and relying upon their efficacy, prove by their spirit and their conduct that they do not belong to the fold of Christ.

'It has been rumoured that this public avowal that the outward ceremony of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are indispensable to Christian union on the part of those who are associated for the express object of *extending* its basis, was conceded against their judgment by some who were present on the occasion, partly in deference to the wishes of their less tolerant coadjutors, and partly in consequence of a statement that if this resolution were not passed, there were other reasons why those who would be excluded by it could not join the Evangelical Alliance.

'It is probable that such is the case, and also that none who are thus excluded have any desire to become its members; but surely this can be no justification of a resolution at variance with the one recognising the right of private judgment in the interpretation of Scripture, and with that charity which the Association professes to be so desirous of promoting.

'These remarks are not offered with an unfriendly feeling, or with any desire to cast the least reflection upon those who deem it their duty to be baptized with water, and to take the bread and wine in the manner established by the different denominations to which they belong, but with high respect

and personal regard towards many of those who are taking part in promoting the proposed Evangelical Alliance, and who, it seems to me, would be acting at variance with that charity which has often been exemplified in their conduct, if they now affirm, even by implication, that none amongst their fellow-probationers on earth belong to the true Church, because they have never been baptized with water or partaken of the bread and wine of the communion table. These will also probably admit that the instances are not few of those who are now removed to their eternal home who, though they had in the near prospect of death no shade of doubt as to the propriety of their abstaining from these outward observances, could yet rest in unshaken confidence on the mercy and mediation of their Saviour, and who have given indubitable evidence that, while they viewed their own works of righteousness but as "filthy rags," they had "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

'If this be true, should not all who have the Spirit of Christ pause before they exclude from fellowship with the Church militant on earth any whom He will judge worthy at the final tribunal—towards which we are all hastening—to form part of the Church triumphant in heaven?

'I am, very respectfully,

'JOSEPH STURGE.

'To John Angell James.'

Mr. James wrote a very kind but hardly a satisfactory answer to his friend's remonstrance:—

'MY DEAR SIR,—I have been so entirely absorbed by business since the receipt of your note that I really had no time to reply to it, or to consider the printed address it was intended to introduce to my attention, and I can now only assure you with great brevity, that it is quite impossible for me to feel in the smallest degree offended by your thus publicly calling my attention to one of the articles of the Evangelical Alliance.

'You may be quite sure from what you know not only of

me, but of the whole conference which passed that article, that it was not intended to treat with disesteem the body of professing Christians to which you belong. We know you too well and love you too much for this. That it is individually exclusive as regards your friends is true, but that it is not *intentionally* exclusive is no less true; and it is considered that it is not the only thing which would prevent your joining with us. It will be in your recollection that you admitted to me, that had not this article been inserted, there were other matters which would have kept you from joining the Alliance. Our object was to secure as many denominations, or rather the members of them, as would cooperate upon a common basis. Now as we could not, without this, secure you, and we could, by inserting it, secure others, it was thought by the majority that we could not dispense with it; and to ensure unanimity many of us gave up our wishes, which was the more readily done as we by no means intended by those articles to draw a line of Christian brotherhood.

'Yours most truly,

'J. A. James.'

As regards slavery, Mr. Sturge felt that as American Christians were invited to join the Alliance, the mode in which that body dealt with the question was really a matter of very urgent practical importance. It had long been felt that the Church in America, in some cases by its open defence, in others by its guilty silence, and in almost all by its feeble testimony respecting the evil thing, formed really the bulwark of slavery. If, therefore, English Christians welcomed its ministers and members into the closest communion with them, asking no questions for conscience' sake, they would be regarded on both sides of the Atlantic as virtually condoning the offence of those implicated in the guilt of slavery, and constructively sanctioning the institution itself. As soon, therefore, as it became known that the

Alliance had sent, or were about to send, invitations to Americans to attend its first World's Convention, to be holden in London in August 1846, the Anti-slavery Society addressed a very able memorial to the committee of the Alliance, in which, after vividly depicting the fearful cruelties and immoralities of the slave system as existing in the United States, and the deplorable extent to which it was vindicated and sustained by large bodies of professing Christians in that country, 'who would feel no difficulty in subscribing the Alliance's confession of faith,' they besought the committee not to invite such men to their association, but rather, in the spirit of Christian fidelity, to refuse to receive into their fellowship all, be their pretensions what they may, who either directly participated or acquiesced in the guilt of upholding or defending the enslavement of their fellow-men. This was backed up by all the personal influence which Mr. Sturge could bring to bear upon the members of the committee. The result was, that at a meeting of the committee of the Alliance, held at Birmingham, March 31, 1846, it was resolved 'that invitations ought not to be sent to individuals who, whether by their own fault or otherwise, may be in the unhappy position of holding their fellow-men as slaves.' Mr. Sturge, in writing to Mr. Lewis Tappan under date of April 31, 1846, adverts to this decision :—

'Thou wilt see in the Anti-slavery "Reporter" of this month a letter from the British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society to the London committee of the Evangelical Alliance on the subject of inviting slaveholders to their general convention in August next, and thou wilt be pleased to hear that at a meeting of their deputies held here this week, after about four hours' discussion, they came to the unanimous conclusion that they should not be invited. Though the resolution is not

worded in a manner that is quite satisfactory to me, had I been a party to it, yet the substance is there. Would it not be well to get your religious newspapers to publish our letter with the fact of this decision, and invite our friends to furnish the names of any parties coming to the Alliance who are members of churches that hold any joint property in slaves, or who are pastors of churches that have slaveholding members, or who, either in their sermons or writings, have defended the system, &c.?'

Unhappily, however, the invitation had been sent out before the Birmingham resolution was adopted, and in such a form as made the doctrinal creed the only term of membership, without any reference whatever to slavery. Many of the American delegates had been appointed, and some of them had actually sailed for England, before this supplementary condition reached them. It does not appear that, with one exception, any of them were personally implicated in slave-holding; but as most, if not all of them, were in Christian fellowship with Southern churches which allowed and vindicated the practice, they were not the less embarrassed and aggrieved. When the Alliance met, they made a strong protest against the question of slavery being introduced at all. The American church was represented by some of its most able and distinguished men, including such names as Dr. Beecher, Dr. Cox, Dr. Patton, Dr. Skinner, Dr. Baird, Dr. Emery, Dr. Mason, Rev. E. N. Kirk, Rev. Mr. Pomeroy, &c. When, however, it was found that the subject could not be evaded, the convention, after a long and very exciting discussion, which at one time almost threatened to wreck the whole confederation, adopted a resolution, in which they 'expressed their confidence that no branch will admit to membership slaveholders who, *by their own fault*,

continue in that position, retaining their fellow-men in slavery, *from regard to their own interests.*' This was felt by many of the English members to be a most equivocal and unsatisfactory conclusion, leaving loopholes through which consciences less unscrupulous than those of most slaveholders would find no difficulty in escaping. But vague and vapid as it was, it was too much for the American delegates. For though they had at first given it a sort of *quasi*-adhesion for the sake of union, yet afterwards, when they came to consider its effect at home, a large number of them felt called upon to reopen the question by a written reclamation addressed to the conference, in which they complained, as indeed they had a just right to do, that the Birmingham resolution had been adopted and sent to them after they had been appointed as delegates under the former conditions, which contained no allusion to slavery. But they did more than this. They condemned the substance of the resolution itself, on the ground, among others, 'that it would exclude from the Alliance not only Christian slaveholders, but the great body of evangelical Christians in the non-slaveholding States of America who are in Christian communion with them.' Far from acquiescing in the idea of non-fellowship with slaveowners, 'our duty,' they said, 'no less than our Christian affection, impels us to maintain intimate relations with them, and we could not, without a grievous offence against the best hopes of religion and humanity in the South, as well as against our own consciences, consent to any action which would imply a want of Christian confidence in them, or which might endanger our amicable and fraternal relations with this portion of the American church.' This led to another stormy debate, which

ended in the Alliance *rescinding* their previous resolution, and 'recommending the members of the Alliance to adopt such organisation in their several countries as in their judgment may be most in accordance with their peculiar circumstances without involving the responsibility of one part of the Alliance for another,' while the final and complete organisation of the *general* Alliance was to be deferred to another conference. This was, surely, a most lame and impotent conclusion, and deeply disappointed and grieved Mr. Sturge and his anti-slavery friends. 'Thou wilt see by the papers,' he says, in writing to Mr. Whittier, 'what a mess the Evangelical Alliance has made of the slavery question, and I fear upon the whole they have done it great harm.' When we remember that men like Dr. Wardlaw, Mr. Angell James, and others, who had through life signalised themselves as the uncompromising enemies of slavery, approved of the course thus taken, we dare not say that the cause of the slave was wilfully betrayed. But there cannot be a doubt that in America, where the action of the conference was watched with the utmost interest, the timidity, vacillation, and final resilience of the Alliance before the face of slavery, was regarded as a heavy blow and a great discouragement by those who in that country were bearing the brunt of the anti-slavery battle. Mr. Whittier was never esteemed a violent man, but the unwonted severity of language he employs in commenting on the proceedings of the Alliance shows how deep was in his estimation the injury they had inflicted on the cause to which he was so earnestly devoted. Writing to his friend, Sept. 27, 1846, he says:—

'I see your Evangelical Alliance has shipwrecked itself on the slavery question. Why is it that humanity and orthodoxy

must needs be divorced from each other? I think I should as soon unite myself with Popery as with a Protestant alliance of slaveholders and pro-slavery preachers? When will men learn that there *can* be "no compromise" between right and wrong?'

Again, a month later, he refers to the question :—

'For me,' he says, 'I do not see that your preachers and ministers in England and Scotland are one whit more abolitionised than their brethren on this side the water. The exhibition which they made of themselves in the Evangelical Alliance has satisfied me that, if they should take up their residence in Slave States, nine in ten of them would in five years either become slaveholders or open defenders of slavery. This is my deliberately-formed opinion; I should rejoice to be able to think otherwise.'

We must pardon something to the spirit of liberty. We think Mr. Whittier would not have said this had he known more intimately many of the men who, in a moment of weakness, had allowed themselves to be seduced into the unhappy compromise of which he complains. But surely this vehemence of speech may well be excused to a man who was smarting under the consciousness that he, and those associated with him in the arduous enterprise that absorbed their whole hearts, had thus been unexpectedly wounded in what they had hoped would be the house of their friends.

As is generally the case, the object which was supposed to justify the compromise was wholly missed. The Americans, from that time forth, withdrew from the general Alliance, and in their own branch peremptorily rejected the term of fellowship suggested by the Birmingham resolution. Under date of June 6, 1847, Mr. Whittier again writes to Mr. Sturge :—

'The American branch of the Evangelical Alliance has refused to exclude slaveholders. There never was a more foolish and wicked compromise with villany than that of the ministers of Great Britain in this matter. They have done more mischief to practical Christianity by that act than they would repair were their lives prolonged a century, and crowded with good works. Let them repent deeply, heartily, if they would save their evangelical Protestantism from the contempt of the world.'

It is but justice to the British branch of the Alliance to say that, as soon as the disturbing element was withdrawn, they made ample amends for their former ambiguous conduct. At their first meeting, we believe, after the general conference, they agreed, by an almost unanimous vote, 'upon mature deliberation on the whole case, without pronouncing any judgment on the personal Christianity of slaveholders, to declare that no holder of a slave shall be deemed eligible to membership in their body.'

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FREE LABOUR MOVEMENT.

The Cotton Manufacture of England the great Support of American Slavery—Superiority of Free over Slave Labour—Mr. John Sturge's Paper on this Subject—Fund for procuring Free Labour Goods—Letters to Mr. G.W. Alexander, Mr. Samuel Rhoades, and Mr. Tappan—Appeal to the Friends of Abolition—New Impulse given to the Question by Mrs. Stowe's Visit—'Uncle Tom's Cabin'—Mr. and Mrs. Stowe at Birmingham—Mr. Sturge enlists them in the Free Labour Movement—Letter to them—Tries to connect Free Labour with India Reform—Letter to Mr. Bright—Exertions of Mr. Elihu Burritt—Spirit of Trade too strong for Philanthropy—Mr. Sturge's personal Abstinence from whatever was tainted with Slavery.

Early in the year 1845 we find Mr. Sturge busily engaged in promoting what was called the Free Labour Movement. It was impossible for those who had taken an active part in the anti-slavery agitation not to feel, what was constantly pressed upon their attention by friends and foes, how greatly our enormous consumption of cotton in this country contributed to the maintenance and extension of slavery in America. Very little reflection and enquiry was sufficient to show that the great Upas-tree, fruitful of so much oppression and misery to the black race, which was spreading its branches more and more widely over the western continent, had its tap-root in Lancashire and Yorkshire. The consciousness of this impelled Mr. Sturge and his fellow-labourers to make an effort to place within reach of the people of England articles manufactured out of

cotton raised by free labour. They hoped by this means not only to relieve their own consciences from indirect complicity with a system they abhorred, but so to encourage the cultivation of free cotton as to make it a formidable competitor in the market to that grown out of the blood and tears of the negro, and thus ultimately prove what, indeed, was a part of their case, that, other things being equal, free labour was cheaper and more productive than slave labour.

A paper on this subject, distinguished by rare ability and research, had been presented to the Anti-slavery Convention of 1840 by his brother, Mr. John Sturge, in which, by an elaborate collation of facts derived not only from our colonies and the United States, but from Russia, Poland, Hungary, and wherever an opportunity existed of comparing free and slave labour, he had shown the great superiority of the former over the latter. After giving his long array of testimonies, he observes :—

'No one, we think, can avoid being struck with the surprising coincidence which exists between all the facts we have cited, although occurring under very different circumstances, and in situations widely distant from each other; or fail to acknowledge that they are sufficient to establish in the clearest and most convincing manner the important principle for which we are contending.'

But the great difficulty was, under the actual circumstances in this country, to bring the produce of free labour into the market on such conditions as would give it a fair chance of competing on equal terms with its rival. Mr. Sturge, therefore, induced a number of his leading anti-slavery friends to join with him in raising a small fund with which to make an experiment in this direction. The leading contributors to this

fund, as to every other connected with the anti-slavery cause, are the old names—Samuel Gurney, Joseph John Gurney, George Thomas, Joseph Eaton, Joseph T. Price, G. W. Alexander, &c., together, of course, with Mr. Sturge's own and his brother's. But the duty of collecting the money seems, as was pretty generally the case, to have principally devolved upon him, as we gather from letters to Mr. Alexander written about this time :—

'I have this morning received the note of S. Gurney forwarded at thy request, agreeing to give 100*l.* towards our free cotton experiment. I have also a letter from Joseph Eaton this morning, by which I understand him to be willing to find 50*l.*'

And at a later date :—

'I am pleased to inform thee that our friend George Thomas has consented to give 50*l.* towards our free-labour stock, and my brother Charles will guarantee either 50*l.* or 70*l.* to make up the 500*l.*'

Their first object, of course, was to procure a supply of bonâ fide free-labour cotton; next to get manufacturers in whose integrity they could confide to work it up into various articles of clothing and other consumption; and then to secure agents and retail dealers in various parts of the country who should feel sufficient interest in the subject to keep the articles as a part of their stock, and bring them under the attention of their customers. Their expectation was, that though in the first instance the price of such articles might be somewhat higher than that of those produced in the ordinary method, yet as the demand for them increased they could be furnished at equal if not lower rates, while in the meantime the existence of such a class of goods would serve as a perpetual remembrancer to the public

conscience, and enable those who were earnest in the cause to present a sort of daily practical protest against all encouragement of slavery. Mr. Sturge entered upon this work with his wonted ardour, and prosecuted it with his wonted perseverance. In conjunction with his friend Mr. G. W. Alexander, then earnestly devoted to the anti-slavery cause, he visited many parts of England to explain this new method of operation and enlist the public sympathies on its behalf. Writing to this gentleman in Nov. 1845, he says:—

'A letter I have from Manchester gives me reason to expect that we may have some of Crewdson's and another manufacturer's actually ready to offer within a fortnight from this time. . . . . We have had much encouragement in our journey; all appear to approve of this cotton plan. At Bristol there were probably not less than 1,200 people present, including a large proportion of those it was important to interest; and at Devonport and Tavistock the meetings were very crowded. At Plymouth it was held at 12 o'clock, and was less numerous and more select.'

Under a later date he thus cheers his coadjutor, who appears to have had some misgivings:—

'I am obliged by thy letter, and though no doubt the difficulties are many in the way of a proper supply of free-labour cotton articles, yet, if we set about it in earnest, I think, or at least hope, that they will not be found quite so great as thou latterly seems to suppose. I think I shall go down to see Wilson Crewdson about it shortly, and shall of course let thee know the result.'

He corresponded largely, also, with friends in America on the subject. Mr. Samuel Rhoades, of Philadelphia, writes to him in Nov. 1845:—

'We are labouring in the free-trade produce cheerfully, and hope to engage in the manufacture of cotton soon. We are surprised to find we can obtain large quantities of this

description in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi.* What will some of your manufacturing friends think of making an arrangement with us to furnish them with free cotton direct from the plantations? I want to see a strong movement in England on this subject, especially among Friends—let them lead the way, as they *should*.'

His own letters to Mr. Lewis Tappan about this time abound with allusions to the free-labour question. Thus, under date of March 1846, he writes :—

'I have ordered to be sent to thee, by the first sailing packet, five pieces of white calico, and one of each of five printed ones, all made of free-labour cotton, as by patterns enclosed. Please let Samuel Rhoades of Philadelphia have a part of them, if he wishes. Anything thou losest by them on the invoice price, please to place to my debit.'

Again, in May of the same year :—

'I wrote a few lines to thee to enquire what is the duty upon such cotton as I have forwarded to thee; also, what would be the duty on dresses made up, as I have an idea of encouraging some of our friends here to send a supply of articles of free-labour cotton to the proposed Philadelphia bazaar. . . . There are 250 bales of cotton arrived from one of the Company's experimental farms in the East Indies, and I hope to get the samples from Liverpool in a day or two.'

In the beginning of 1846, the preliminary arrangements having been sufficiently matured, an address was issued 'To the Friends of the Abolition of the Slave-Trade and Slavery,' signed by Joseph J. Gurney, George Thomas, Joseph Eaton, Joseph Sturge, and G. W. Alexander, calling attention to the movement. A short extract from this document will explain the views of its promoters :—

* From Mr. Olmsted's works, it appears that before the outbreak of the civil war, one-tenth at least of the cotton of the United States was grown by free-labour.

'We have already stated, in concurrence with the testimony of some of the most eminent friends of the slaves in the United States, and undeniable facts, that the demand for the cotton of that country in Great Britain has been a chief means of perpetuating and extending slavery in America. Shortly after the declaration of American independence, there was much ground to hope that slavery would not long exist in the Union. The tide of public opinion, which had already led to acts for the abolition of slavery in several of the Northern States, was directed with considerable force against it; there were at that time few articles of export produced by slaves in the States of great pecuniary value. In 1790, the number of slaves was 657,000, and the cotton exported 189,000 lbs. In 1843, the number of slaves was estimated at 2,847,810; the cotton exported was 1,081,919,000 lbs.; and unless the most vigorous means be used to stay this mighty evil, it is impossible to calculate what may be its future extension. Shall we, then, continue to uphold and furnish an inducement for the maintenance of this vast system of crime and misery which we profess to deplore and abhor? Humanity, justice, and religion forbid us to do so; and we therefore confidently cherish the hope that, as one means of discountenancing slavery, many of our countrymen and countrywomen will now be found willing and determined, as far as in them lies, to relinquish the use of American slave-grown cotton. . . . We are glad to be able to inform those into whose hands this may fall, that an attempt is being made in this country to obtain a supply of articles manufactured exclusively from cotton the produce of free labour. It has been ascertained that some highly respectable manufacturers are willing to aid in carrying out the wishes of some friends of the anti-slavery cause in this country in making such an article, which will be distinguished by a mark to show its genuineness. In the first instance, the number of articles will be small; but if encouragement be given to the attempt, a greater variety will hereafter be manufactured and offered for sale.'

Mr. Sturge continued to sustain this movement for many years, and expended upon it a good deal of time, labour, and money. The visit of Mr. and Mrs. Stowe into this country, and the general interest excited on behalf of the anti-slavery cause by the extraordinary success of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' gave, for a while, a fresh impulse to the free-labour movement; and it was hoped that the public generally might be induced to make some sacrifice and to take some little trouble to give practical expression to the sympathies for the slaves which had been so widely awakened. We can readily understand the cordial pleasure with which Mr. Sturge welcomed the appearance of that remarkable book. Writing to Mr. Tappan, who had first called his attention to it, he says:—

'I have read "Uncle Tom" since I wrote to thee, and think it deserves all the praise that has been bestowed upon it. . . . No common head or heart could have composed such a work, even with an intimate knowledge of the effects of slavery upon the character both of the owners and the slaves. It evinces no small knowledge both of human nature and Christian experience, to delineate, as the writer has done, some of the prominent characters. It is indeed a great thing to get such a work generally read with you both North and South, and I am not without hopes that it may do more to produce a change in public opinion among you than anything that has yet occurred. . . . It would be an interesting and glorious fact if a female pen should be made the instrument of overthrowing the monster Slavery in your land.'

When Mrs. Stowe visited England, Joseph Sturge's house became naturally one of her homes. When, therefore, she had been nearly lionised to death by the good people of Scotland, Dr. Stowe, with a wise instinct where to find what he wanted, applied to him to afford

them a few days' quiet retreat at Edgbaston, where they might rest and recover their strength. In her 'Sunny Memories,' Mrs. Stowe remarks upon what so many besides have felt, the kind of unworldly calm which reigned in that happy circle :—

'The grounds of Mr. Sturge,' she says, describing a Sunday she spent there, 'are very near to those of his brother, only a narrow road interposing between them. They have contrived to make them one by building under this road a subterranean passage, so that the two families can pass and repass into each other's grounds in perfect privacy. At noon we dined at the house of the other brother, Mr. Edmund Sturge. . . . We enjoyed our quiet season with those two families exceedingly. We seemed to feel ourselves in an atmosphere where all was peace and goodwill to men. The little children, after dinner, took us through the walks to show us their beautiful rabbits and other pets. Everything seemed orderly, peaceable, quiet. . . . My Sunday here has always seemed to me a pleasant kind of pastoral, much like the communion of Christian and Faithful on the Delectable Mountains.'

We need hardly say that Mr. Sturge was one of those who delighted to honour this eminent lady ; but he was not satisfied that the effects of her visit should evaporate in mere demonstrations of popular feeling, but wished that they should be turned to some account in furthering the great cause to which she had already rendered such distinguished services. He was deeply anxious, therefore, to enlist her interest and that of her husband in the free-labour question. Writing to Mr. Tappan, under date of May 5, 1853, he says :—

'I received a note from Professor Stowe from Edinburgh last week, in which he said they were completely worn-out and exhausted, and asking me "for the sake of Christ and

humanity" to receive them privately, as they were intending to come to my house on the Thursday evening, with the hope of getting a little rest. They stayed with me, including a visit to Stratford, Warwick, and Kenilworth, in which I accompanied them, from that evening until Monday, which afforded me the full opportunity I wanted to go into the questions of immediate emancipation, compensation to slave-owners, and the disuse of slave-grown produce; and I am glad to say that it resulted in a full unity of view on the latter subject. . . . . Her husband and brother are also heartily with us, and the former intends to make a speech on the subject at the Exeter Hall Meeting on the 16th. I think if the abolitionists on both sides the water can cordially unite on this point, something effectual may be done.'

Mr. Sturge had a considerable correspondence with Mr. and Mrs. Stowe on this question after their return to America. In one of her letters Mrs. Stowe says :—

'Since I wrote last, Henry Miles, a member of the Society of Friends, has called upon me and communicated a good many encouraging facts with regard to a free-labour movement in America. I feel quite encouraged to hope that a way is opening in which something efficient can be done.'

To which Mr. Sturge replies, addressing Professor and Mrs. Stowe, November 25, 1853 :—

'Your welcome letters to Hannah and myself have both come to hand by the same packet, and we are cheered to hear of the progress of the free-labour question in the minds of abolitionists. I have this week been in Lancashire chiefly in relation to this subject, and last night attended a public meeting at Manchester, the chief objects of which were, first to endeavour to influence your Christian Churches in the right direction on the anti-slavery question, and secondly, to encourage the consumption of free-labour in preference to slave-labour produce. On the latter point I read some short extracts from your letter. The feeling appeared almost

unanimous, that we must look chiefly to British India for *our* supply of free-grown cotton; and at a select meeting the night before, at which John Bright was present, the main point considered was, how we could most effectually influence those who control the government of that vast country, so as to secure the cheap production of sugar and cotton. Now that the abolitionists of America are alive to this subject, I beg to suggest that some of your manufacturers who are favourable to the object should be encouraged to make things on the spot from free-labour cotton, instead of getting them from England as they do now, since the carriage of the cotton from America, and of the goods back again, as well as the thirty per cent. duty, would thus be saved, and the risk of deception lessened. I believe there is quite as much difficulty in getting the manufacturers to make them here as with you, while the moral influence of such a manufacture with you would be greater upon the South, I should suppose, than with us.'

Mr. Sturge also endeavoured, as will be seen from the above letter, to engraft this free-labour idea on the India Reform movement, which a body of able and earnest men, headed by Mr. Bright, were striving to promote in and out of Parliament. The following communication to Mr. Bright, dated November 5, 1853, refers to this, and no doubt led to the meeting at Manchester described in the preceding letter:—

'Birmingham: 11 mo. 9, 1853.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have been for some time strongly of opinion that the abolitionists of this country should very much concentrate their efforts upon the encouragement of the cheap production and the improvement of the quality by free labour of the articles now largely cultivated by slaves, especially cotton, sugar, and rice; and the view thou took in a letter which I received from thee last summer on the East India question, was so entirely in harmony with my own, that I have been wishing for a suitable opportunity of more

fully going into the question of how far those who are willing to work mainly on anti-slavery grounds can cooperate and aid in the efforts of your India Reform Society. There is no doubt that the attention you have called to the misgovernment of British India has been of very great importance, and that whoever may have the control of that department in future will be disposed to meet the views of any considerable party in this country, who were united for encouraging the extended and improved cultivation and the facilities of transit of the great staples of India. I have partly engaged to go to Manchester ere long, to talk over, with a few practical manufacturers, the best means of increasing the supply of free-labour cotton; and if anything were likely to call thee there shortly, or thou couldst come over to Manchester for a few hours, I would try to make my time suit thine. I have to-day received a private circular (which I presume thou hast seen) from George Buist, of the "Bombay Times," proposing to give lectures on India, here and elsewhere. It is accompanied by a note of introduction from H. D. Seymour. I fear there is so little interest here on the subject, that scarcely any but a great lion like thyself would secure a respectable audience.

'Affectionately thy friend,

'JOS. STURGE.'

Mr. Elihu Burritt, also, threw all the fervour of his spirit into the same cause, and issued some very able papers, tending to show how rapidly and vitally abstinence from slave-labour produce on the part of the British public would affect the institution of slavery in America. 'If,' he says, in one of his papers, 'there were a movement set on foot in Great Britain which would, in the view of the slaveholders, close the British market against their productions at the end of ten years if they persisted in adhering to their system up to that time, they would doubtless emancipate their slaves immediately, and adopt the system of free labour. For

they would not risk the loss of the British market for any consideration which the existence of slavery could supply. The same would be true of the slaveholders of Brazil and Cuba.' Nor did these zealous labourers in the cause of freedom fail to appeal to the manufacturers on the ground of self-interest, where they were not accessible on the plea of philanthropy, by pointing out to them how hazardous it was to depend upon one country for the supply of an article of such immense importance as cotton, which might be suddenly cut off by a failure of the crop, or a war between the two nations. It is impossible now not to reflect, that if these efforts and appeals had been effectual—if the manufacturers of Lancashire on the one hand, and the people of England on the other, had given timely heed to the warnings and exhortations then addressed to them—the terrible calamity which has been since the occasion of so much suffering and crime might have been averted. But the voice was as of one crying in the wilderness. Comparatively few cared to listen to it, and of those who did, the majority treated it with the ready scorn with which the world is apt to treat all ideas which aspire to look beyond its own narrow purview. The spirit of trade was then, as it ever is, deaf to the pleadings of justice and humanity, and, obedient only to its own hard laws and sordid interests, drove its car onward with a roll inexorable as fate, reckless of who or what might be crushed beneath its Juggernaut wheels. And the good people of England, with the tears in their eyes from reading 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' found it pleasanter to express their love for freedom, their sympathy for the slave, and their hatred of oppression, by denunciations and remonstrances addressed to sinners in America, than by making any serious efforts

or sacrifice to clear themselves of complicity in the sin at home.

At any rate Mr. Sturge left no means untried to keep his own conscience clear in the matter. In his household nothing was allowed which, so far as he knew, bore on it any taint of slavery. The extent to which he carried his abhorrence of the unclean thing, and his determination not to touch it, if possible, by however remote a relation, is strikingly indicated in the following extract from a letter which he wrote to Mr. Lewis Tappan, under date of September 3, 1846 :—

'As we are defeated in our attempt to get any legislative interference with slave-grown produce, it does not lessen, but perhaps increase, our obligation to be particular about touching it in our individual capacity, or in our mercantile transactions. I am anxious to be as clear of it as possible. In consequence of the free-trade measures of this country, it is likely we shall have considerable transactions with the United States in grain and flour, and, if we wish it, with some of your slave States, especially Baltimore and New Orleans. Now, I not only am desirous, as a matter of principle, but I believe the effort would be very beneficial, not to transact business with those who employ slaves in any branch of their establishment, or in putting the goods on board ship. I wish thee to give me thy opinion both as to whether this would be practicable, and, if so, whether, in either or both these places, or any other slave port which ships corn and flour, thou could name a party well acquainted with our business who could be certainly depended upon to execute commissions, and to employ none but free men in their establishment, or in shipping the goods. If thou canst not, I should be obliged by any suggestion from thee as to the best mode of carrying out the object I have just named. As so much of the corn and flour which is shipped in the slave States comes from those which are free, I do not feel at all called upon to enquire further than whether those we

actually commission to act on our behalf are free from the system.'

If it be said that this was to enquire too curiously, and that any attempt to follow trade transactions into all the remote and possible relations of a questionable nature by which they may be effected would paralyse all thebu siness of life, be it so. It is something, at least, to find a man consistently *trying* to carry his conscience with him into his commerce. If Mr. Sturge has by so doing given a dangerous example, there is small fear of the contagion spreading very widely. A too fastidious commercial morality is not likely to become the besetting sin of this generation.

CHAPTER XIX.

ENGLAND AND AMERICA — FRENCH REVOLUTION — ANTI-PAPAL AGITATION.

Disturbed Relations between England and America—The Maine Boundary Question—Mr. Sturge's Anxiety and Exertions—Lord Ashburton's Settlement—Letter from Mr. Tappan—The Oregon Difficulty—Great Excitement in America—International Addresses—Mr. Sturge's Activity in promoting them—Their good Effect—Letters from Mr. Whittier and Mr. Tappan—The Militia Bill—Successful Opposition to it—Letter from Mr. Douglas Jerrold—The French Revolution of 1848—Deputation to the Provisional Government—Abolition of Slavery in the French Colonies—Mr. Sturge's Interview with M. Arago and M. Schœlcher—Presentation of Address to Provisional Government—Religious Liberty—The Pope's Rescript—Great Excitement it occasioned—Meeting called at Birmingham—Mr. Sturge's Address to his Fellow-Townsmen—Moves an Amendment at the Meeting—The Result.

It will be readily understood how, with the intimate relations existing between him and many dear friends in America with whom he was working together for the common interests of humanity, any appearance of war between the two countries filled his mind with peculiar horror. On more than one occasion, however, this calamity seemed imminent. On the accession of the Conservative Government, in 1841, they found left on their hands by their predecessors an American difficulty of a very formidable nature, that relating to the Maine boundary, the discussion of which had produced great acerbity of feeling between the two Governments Mr. Sturge had then just returned from America and the acquaintance he had formed with many

men like-minded with himself in that country enabled him to promote something like concerted action between the friends of peace on both sides of the Atlantic, in their efforts to allay that irritability of public opinion which so frequently exasperates international differences and so greatly adds to the embarrassment of statesmen in guiding them to a peaceable issue. The letters which at that time passed between him and his correspondents in the United States abound with allusions to this subject. But in the crisis of the dispute Lord Ashburton had been sent out by our Government with plenipotentiary powers to deal with the matters in dispute. Without encumbering this page with extracts showing the deep anxiety felt on both sides of the Atlantic by those concerned for the preservation of peace, suffice it to give one from a letter of Mr. Tappan, accompanying the auspicious result of this happily-conceived mission. Writing under date of August 31, 1842, he says:—

'I have time by this steamer to write only a few words. Lord Ashburton has concluded a treaty with our Government on terms advantageous to both nations. It has been ratified by the senate of the United States, and now awaits the ratification of Queen Victoria. Most of the troublesome matters are happily arranged. The *Creole* case is not included. Those violent men in this country who asserted that adherence to the ground taken by the British Government would be a just cause of war, have lowered their crests. Lord A. has conducted the matter with great ability and address, and the people here are forward in paying all the respect and honour to him that is in their power. How very thankful we ought to be that hostilities are prevented by this amicable arrangement. Just as easy would it always be to avoid war, if both parties were determined on maintaining amity. May we not hope that the war spirit has subsided, and that the

peaceful principles of the religion of the Prince of Peace will hereafter sway the councils of nations?'

But, about the years 1845–6, other questions of a dangerous import had sprung up between the two countries which began greatly to inflame the public mind, especially among our excitable cousins in America. The long-pending Oregon difficulty, in particular, assumed at one time a very menacing aspect. President Polk, in his message to Congress at the close of 1845, had adverted to the question in anything but a conciliatory tone. A portion of the American press was violent in the extreme, while certain members of Congress indulged very largely in what they called patriotism, but others bunkum. There was also in this country a party, happily at that time not large, disposed to respond to that foolish braggadocio in a tone of challenge and defiance not less fierce. One paper particularly, which was supposed to represent some portion of the deposed Whig ministry, laboured hard to exasperate the public mind, clamouring loudly for 'a war minister, and twenty war steamers on the coast of America.' Under these circumstances the peace party in England felt that they were called upon to put forth renewed activity to avert the threatened rupture. The Peace Society and the Society of Friends presented memorials to the Government in favour of settling the matter in dispute by arbitration, which were received by Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen with marked satisfaction. The gentlemen from the latter body who waited upon the prime minister reported that 'he received the deputation with something more than courtesy, evincing by his remarks a deep interest in their object, and suggesting that our American brethren should use their influence in a

similar manner for its accomplishment.' At the instigation of the peace party in this country, a system of international correspondence was organised, which was attended with a very happy effect. Certain towns in England would send addresses, couched in language of kindness and good-will and strongly deprecating war, signed by the mayor and magistrates, the ministers of all denominations, and other leading inhabitants, to corresponding towns in America, supposed to bear some relation to them by identity of origin or interest, or by similarity of position and pursuit. These, in many instances, awoke on the other side of the Atlantic the heartiest responses, proving that in some cases the surest preservative of peace is for the *people* to step in front of the professional politicians, sometimes heated with a spirit of partisanship and personality, and speak to each other directly face to face and heart to heart.

Mr. Sturge threw himself into the movement of which we have spoken with uncommon earnestness. Writing to Mr. Lewis Tappan, on March 3, 1846, he says :—

'I am obliged by thine of the 30th of January, and was glad to learn from it and other quarters that the pacific tone of our press had been a source of satisfaction with you. I have been much engaged on this peace question lately. At a meeting at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester, there were probably 7,000 people present; and the feeling there and elsewhere is more on the side of peace than I could have hoped to see.'

In a letter to the same correspondent, two or three months later, he writes again :—

'I hope and trust that the good people of America will not allow their President and his mad and unprincipled supporters to plunge the two countries into war. I *think* if the fault is not more on the side of America than England that war will not take place. I enclose a copy of a short address

agreed to by our Peace Association to-day, and will thank thee to put it in such a way of publication as thou thinks best.'

There are frequent references, also, to the international addresses then in progress.* Among those who had joined in the war-like outcry in America was the venerable John Quincy Adams, who had delivered a violent speech in Congress which had deeply grieved some of his best friends on both sides of the Atlantic. Mr. Sturge, who, from community of sentiment on the slavery question, had been brought into rather intimate relations with Mr. Adams during his visit to America, was encouraged to write to him, which he did in a

* How these efforts of the friends of peace in England were regarded by those in America interested in the maintenance of peace, may be seen from the following extract from one of the foremost journals of the country:—

'Some days since, we copied from the *Manchester Times* (England) an "Appeal to the Merchants of the Realm," urging them to originate a friendly address from their body to the merchants of the United States. Nobly was it conceived, energetically was it expressed, and with full confidence that a kindred sentiment would actuate kindred minds on this side of the Atlantic. It concluded thus:—"Banish war from your very thoughts; and let your peaceful watchword be, on all occasions, 'Arbitrate! arbitrate!! arbitrate!!!'" This language, be it observed, was addressed, not to Americans, but to Englishmen. It was an appeal to the better feelings of the human heart—to the spirit of Christianity, in opposition to the spirit of evil. When men can rise thus above the infirmities of their nature, bury their pride, and act the part of peace-makers, even at the risk of the misinterpretation of their motives, they show themselves to belong to the true nobility of their race, however deficient they may be in earth's titles and distinctions. There are some such noblemen in this country as well as in England, and the number is far greater than would be at first imagined. . . . . Every day adds to the strength of the peace party. . . . . The generous men in England who prompted the peace movement mentioned in the following documents, do not appear to have dreamed that arbitration would be refused by our Government. But they must not be discouraged, nor remit their efforts in so good a cause. Public opinion in this country moves slowly, but is very apt to come right at last.'—(From the *New York Journal of Commerce*, Feb. 12, 1846.)

letter of earnest and kind remonstrance. To this he refers in a letter to Mr. Tappan :—

'A friend of mine, on whose judgment I place some reliance, wished me to write to J. Q. Adams. I doubt the use of it, but if thou approvest of the accompanying letter, send it. . . . . We are a good deal concerned, and fear the consequence of the news just arrived that your President has refused to arbitrate. Surely the time is come for a separation of the Union.'

Happily, we had then, on this side of the water, a minister who knew how to combine with the maintenance of national dignity a cordial love of peace, while the press and people generally had not yet been imbued with that spirit of mingled pugnacity and panic which has since been developed amongst us, under the influence of what has assumed the pseudonym of 'a public spirited policy.' Instead of hurling defiance at President Polk, Sir Robert Peel displayed throughout a calm and conciliatory temper; and Lord Aberdeen, taking advantage of a reaction in Congress against the war party, sent out a new proposal of compromise to our Minister at Washington, which happily, after a long and violent debate, was approved by a large majority of the Senate. Our press also, with the exception already indicated, instead of retorting upon our choleric cousins the fillibustering tone which many of them had assumed, turned it aside with a smile of good-humoured pleasantry, and proved the truth of the ancient adage, which, unhappily, has of late fallen into so much disrepute amongst us, that 'A soft answer turneth away wrath.'

The following extracts from two letters of Mr. Whittier to Mr. Sturge, the first dated January, the other March, 1846, refer to some of those points, and show

how deep was the anxiety felt by the friends of peace on both sides of the Atlantic during that critical conjuncture :—

'Thy kind note by the last steamer has reached me. I had looked to the arrival of that steamer with intense interest. The tone of President Polk's message in relation to Oregon was a source of great regret, even to those who, like myself, believe that the American title to that territory is a good one. War, at this day, and between two nations of highly professing Christians, would be an awful absurdity. I am glad to see that the whole tone of the English press is peaceful—the bravado of the message appears to be pretty well estimated. In Congress, on our side the water, a debate is going on which looks at times rather warlike ; but I can assure thee that a great deal of the ferocity is assumed by the speakers, and for *home* effect. It looks *patriotic* to eulogise ourselves and abuse the British. Among our Indians it is customary to set up a log or post, painted so as to have some faint resemblance of a warrior of a hostile tribe; and each young savage marches bravely up to it and smites it with his tomahawk, in this way giving proof of his manhood. It is very much so with our new members of Congress. They belabour the British lion *in the abstract* just as the Indians do the painted log.'

'I have seen with no slight degree of interest that the friends of peace in Great Britain are actively engaged in the good work of repressing the war feeling. We are doing what we can here. I hope our friends will act on the suggestion thrown out by Sir Robert Peel in his interview with English Friends. I have hopes that our Meeting for Sufferings in New England will act. The tone of many members of Congress, and of a portion of our editors of public papers, is as vindictive and warlike as the enemy of all good could well wish ; but the great body of both Congress and people are in favour of peace. Nobody here expects war. Our Government has evidently never expected it, for they are wholly unprepared for it. For my own part, I think there is every

reason to believe that the offer on the part of your Government of the 49° boundary would be accepted by our own.'

To the same effect was the language of Mr. Tappan:

'The peace addresses that have been sent to this country by numerous bodies of men in yours have been widely published, and are producing a most beneficial effect. Not only are the Christians of both countries opposed to war, but the considerate and judicious inhabitants of England and the United States see that it would produce mighty evils without any compensating good. The friends of peace in this country, also, are active in disseminating their principles. May the Prince of Peace bless their efforts, and listen to the prayers of His people so that war may be averted!'

On the American side, also, some of their ablest statesmen set themselves resolutely to oppose the cry of the fillibusterers. Mr. Calhoun and Mr. Benton, in particular, spoke with great wisdom and moderation; and it was largely by their influence that the policy of Congress was guided into the ways of peace:—

'The Oregon question,' says Mr. Tappan in a letter dated May 27, 1846, 'you may deem settled. Mr. Benton, the leading democrat in the Senate, in a speech begun last Friday, continued on Monday, and to be concluded on Wednesday, has demonstrated that the United States has no just claim to any of the territory north of the 49°; that the 55° has been the *northern* boundary of Great Britain. His collection of facts is so ample and his argument so conclusive, that it will be impossible, I think, for the administration at Washington to contend that we have any reasonable claim to an inch of territory beyond the 49°.'

There were other questions, moreover, which at that time demanded the vigilance and activity of the friends of peace. The Government, for no very intelligible reason, introduced a Militia Bill into Parliament, the

first of a long series of efforts, which proved ultimately successful, to frighten the British public into a state of panic, under the influence of which the military establishments might be increased to any extent. Mr. Sturge, in common with all the members of the peace party, and in common, indeed, with the great majority of the nation, at that time, felt the strongest antipathy to this measure. An agitation was organised against it upon a large scale; meetings were held in most of the large towns, and petitions poured in to Parliament at such a rate as convinced the Government that it would not be safe to attempt to force it upon the country. It was accordingly abandoned for the time, while the excitement it occasioned afforded an excellent opportunity to the friends of peace, of which they were not slow to avail themselves, to teach to the people the Christian doctrines of peace on earth and good-will among men. A crowded meeting was held at the Town Hall, Birmingham, at which resolutions utterly condemning the principles and practices of war were carried by acclamation. This, in a town so largely dependent upon the manufacture of arms, was deemed a significant indication of the pacific temper of the times. The following letter from Mr. Douglas Jerrold, whose witty and incisive pen was habitually employed on the side of humanity and peace, shows how vigilantly Mr. Sturge put himself in communication with all, in whatever circle, who contributed to the promotion of the great Christian ideas whose triumph he was so anxious to secure. He had a considerable correspondence with Mr. Jerrold about this time, on the same subjects:—

'East Lodge, Putney, Surrey: Feb. 22, 1846.

'DEAR SIR,—Thanks for your kind letter. It is my intention to follow up the subjects of soldiering and war and

judicial man-killing, in "Punch," in my Magazine, and in the "Daily News." In the latter paper it is my design to write on the Peace Movement on Monday—the subject is as suggestive as it is noble. I have met with many remonstrances, with much abuse, for a recent article in "Punch," on "The Moral Lessons of the Gallows," but shall go on in the full assurance that that iniquity cannot and must not continue. The fact of an anti-war meeting taking place in what may be called the arsenal of England, is, indeed, encouraging. I shall be happy to receive, at any time, information that you may think capable of being used in furtherance of the good cause, and am,

'Yours sincerely,

'Douglas Jerrold.'

In the early part of 1848, England and Europe were startled with the intelligence that a revolution had broken out in Paris, that Louis Philippe and his family were deposed and fugitive; that a republic had been proclaimed, and a provisional government formed, at the head of which were Lamartine, and Arago, and Ledru Rollin. The new order of things had begun hopefully. The Parisians had, on the whole, shown great moderation and self-control in the midst of their triumphs. Lamartine's commanding eloquence had succeeded in wielding at will the fierce democracy which had surged day by day around the Hôtel de Ville, and dissuading the populace from unfurling the red flag and rushing into an armed propagandism on behalf of the nationalities. The manifesto he issued on taking possession of the Foreign Office was so wise and conciliatory as to inspire confidence in the other European Governments. It is almost inevitable that sudden changes like that, effected ostensibly in the interests of popular liberty, should awaken rather too exalted hopes in sanguine and generous natures.

Such was the effect produced in England by the third French Revolution. Meetings were held in various parts of the country to congratulate the people of France on what was supposed to be the final achievement of their political freedom. Among others was one held in London, at which it was resolved to send a deputation to Paris with an address of sympathy and respect to the Provisional Government. Mr. Sturge was one of those appointed to be the bearers of the address. The deep interest he ever felt in the cause of popular liberty would no doubt of itself have inclined him to accept this nomination. But there were other motives of still more prevailing force probably in his case. In the first flush of enthusiasm the men who had been so hastily summoned to guide the French nation in that moment of anarchy had decreed the abolition, first of capital punishment for political offences, and secondly of slavery in all the French colonies, and these measures had been ratified with acclamation by the popular voice. Still there was danger lest such ebullitions of humane and magnanimous impulse should, amid the excitements of the occasion, fail to be translated into act. Mr. Sturge therefore felt, especially in regard to the question of slavery, that the presence and friendly encouragement of some of those who had been prominently connected with the abolition movement in England might furnish just the sort of stimulus that was required to prevent the generous intentions of the Provisional Government from lapsing. Happily, as he afterwards found, M. Victor Schœlcher, who was at the time Under-Secretary for the Colonies, was thoroughly devoted to the cause of the slave, though no doubt he was greatly cheered and strengthened by the counsels, at that moment, of one who had borne so

conspicuous a part in the abolition of British Colonial Slavery.

An extract or two from letters which he wrote to Mrs. Sturge while at Paris, will give us a glimpse into scenes and circumstances not without considerable historic interest :—

'Paris: 3rd mo. 11, 1848.

'After I wrote thee yesterday, G. W. Alexander and I called on Isambert and General Arthur O'Connor, but did not find either of them at home. We saw, however, the wife of the latter, and she made an appointment for us to meet them at seven o'clock, at Isambert's, where we found them accordingly at that hour of the evening. The General came to breakfast with us this morning, and afterwards accompanied G. W. A. and myself to M. Arago, the Minister of Marine, on the Anti-slavery question. He was not within, but we are to see him at eight o'clock to-morrow. We have a letter from Lamartine to-day, fixing half-past three o'clock to-morrow for us to meet the Provisional Government. As General O'Connor is a personal friend of several of the ministers, and perfectly master of both languages, we have asked him to accompany us, and he has put off a journey to Orleans in order to do so. The weather is beautifully fine, and few would suppose that so great a revolution had so recently taken place here. Even in the Tuileries there is little trace of it but a few broken windows, and the trees there seem quite uninjured.

'3rd mo. 3.—This morning G. W. Alexander and I went with General O'Connor to call upon the Minister of Marine on the Anti-slavery question, and had a *very* satisfactory interview with him. The rest of the morning we employed in calling upon the old friends of the Anti-slavery cause. At three o'clock we started, with O'Connor as our interpreter, to the Hôtel de Ville, to present the address. When we arrived, we found the ante-chamber crowded with English residents in Paris, who had an appointment half-an-hour before us to present an address. But, quite unexpectedly,

we were called in before them, and found the new ministers surrounded by the official splendour so recently vacated by royalty. The President of the Council was not present, and Lamartine acted as president. He requested that I should read the address, and, as far as I could see, he spoke English well. After I had concluded, he made a speech in reply in French, which, as I was informed, was a cordial response to the sentiments of the address. As there were reporters present, there will, I expect, be a full account both of the address and speech. I made one or two remarks, and G. W. A. said a few words on the Anti-slavery question. Upon the whole, our reception was very cordial. . . . We afterwards saw the Under-Secretary for the Colonies, who has to draw up the Act of Abolition, and he gave us some confidential information which quite satisfied us of their determination totally and immediately to abolish slavery.'

It is hardly necessary to say that, both from principle and temper, Mr. Sturge was a thorough friend of religious liberty. The Society to which he belonged is perhaps the only sect that has never persecuted for conscience sake, while the firm but patient and peaceful spirit in which they have borne their own sufferings from that source, has done more than almost anything else to make others ashamed of persecution. An opportunity was afforded him about the time at which we have now arrived in his history to give a signal proof of his readiness to vindicate the religious rights even of those from whom he was most widely separated in matters of creed and observance.

The latter part of the year 1850 was marked by a sudden and most vehement anti-papal excitement which swept like a hurricane over the face of the island. It had seemed good to the Pope to issue an 'Apostolic letter,' as it was called, establishing a Roman Catholic Episcopal hierarchy in England. The country was

divided into sees, and was to be governed ecclesiastically by one archbishop and twelve suffragans—these dignitaries to derive their titles from their own sees, and to be called Archbishop of Westminster, Bishop of Southwark, Bishop of Northampton, &c. This arrangement, it was hoped, 'would by the grace of God bring new and daily increase to the power of Catholicism.' It was, no doubt, an absurd and arrogant document, and might have justified some indignation and a great deal of ridicule. But instead of looking upon it in that light, the public mind rushed into one of those violent paroxysms of panic to which, for a people naturally so sensible and sedate, we are singularly prone. The papal rescript was everywhere denounced as dealing a deadly blow at the British constitution and the Protestant religion. The old Anti-popery cry was raised from John O'Groat's House to the Land's End, and the Government and Parliament were assailed with loud demands for immediate legislation, as the only means of saving our liberties and our faith from destruction. There were a few, and only a few, of the old friends of religious freedom who stood faithful to their principles at that crisis. Among these was Joseph Sturge. It is hardly necessary to say that he had not the remotest sympathy with the Roman Catholic faith. But he felt strongly that the outcry which resounded through the country was absurdly out of proportion to any just cause of alarm that existed, and was like to hurry the nation into conclusions which would be far more injurious to the interests both of civil liberty and true Protestant principles than the alleged 'Popish invasion.' When, therefore, a town's meeting was called by requisition in Birmingham to consider the question, he felt bound, at whatever sacrifice of feeling, to stand in the

breach and, to the best of his ability, to oppose what he could not but feel an unworthy outbreak of fanaticism. As soon as the meeting was announced, he issued the following address:—

'TO THE FRIENDS OF CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN BIRMINGHAM.

'FELLOW-TOWNSMEN,—Though strongly opposed on principle to both the contending hierarchies, I have been so much surprised and grieved at observing some of you uniting in the clamour which has been created in consequence of an alleged aggression by the Pope, that I venture to ask whether you have not far more reason to condemn the State Church, which has raised the storm—a Church which, while a large proportion of its clergy profess similar doctrines to those which are denounced, appropriates vast public revenues to the support of its ecclesiastical establishment, and even employs the power of the State to tax the members of other religious communions for the same purpose?

'As a town's meeting has been called on the subject for the 11th instant, allow me to submit that it is your duty to attend and negative proceedings that are dangerous to religious freedom.

'Very respectfully,

'JOSEPH STURGE.

'Birmingham: 12th mo. (Dec.) 6, 1850.'

On the appointed day the meeting was held at the Town hall. The excitement was intense. 'Of the number present,' said the 'Birmingham Mercury,' 'we are speaking within bounds when we say that there were upwards of 8,000, all the seats in the ground-floor being withdrawn, and the vacant space crammed to the extreme.' A memorial to the Queen was proposed, denouncing the Pope's bull in the usual terms as 'an audacious attack upon our civil and religious liberty,' and praying Her Majesty to 'take immediate steps to vin-

dicate her prerogative,' &c. When the mover and seconder of the memorial had finished their speeches, Mr. Sturge rose to move an amendment. This was the signal for a tremendous storm of disapprobation and counter-cheers. The amendment declared that, in the opinion of Her Majesty's loyal subjects of the borough of Birmingham, the appointment of the Roman Catholic hierarchy did not require any legislative interference. 'We respectfully, yet earnestly, deprecate,' it continued, 'all restrictions upon the free enjoyment by every religious body within your Majesty's dominions of its spiritual order and discipline. We therefore entreat your Majesty to sanction such measures as may be proposed for securing the maintenance of civil and religious liberty.' All the notabilities of Birmingham were present and took part in the debate that ensued, and which lasted all day, the excitement growing more fast and furious as the decision drew nigh. It ended in a kind of drawn battle, the mayor, after putting the amendment and original resolution, declaring that 'the amendment *was not carried*,' and that 'the original resolution *was lost*.' This was, of course, tantamount to a defeat of the requisitionists. The effect of this meeting was great, not only in Birmingham, but throughout the country. It was the first occasion on which the tide of anti-papal agitation had been resisted and turned. No doubt the task which Mr. Sturge had to perform on that day was, in many respects, painful to him. He had to appear in opposition to old friends, like John Angell James and others, with whom it had been the pleasure of his life to cooperate. But it was a duty from which he dared not shrink, and we believe his mind was never to the end of life troubled with a solitary misgiving as to the part he acted on that occasion.

CHAPTER XX.

THE PEACE MOVEMENT.

Mr. Sturge's Principles respecting War—Long interval of Rest after the Peace of 1816—Growth of Pacific Sentiments in Europe—Speeches of Sir James Mackintosh and Sir Robert Peel—Accession of the Whigs deemed an additional Guarantee for Peace—The Change in our Foreign Policy—Wars and Rumours of Wars—Revival of old Animosity between England and France—First Invasion Panic—Efforts of the Friends of Peace—Diffusion of the Christian Doctrine of Peace—Movement in favour of International Arbitration—Mr. Cobden's Motion in Parliament—Peace Congresses on the Continent—Mr. Sturge's large Share in the Peace Movement—The Value of his Services—Extracts from his Letter to Mr. Tappan, Rev. John Clark, and Mr. Whittier.

We are now coming to a period when Mr. Sturge's time and labours became increasingly devoted to the Peace question. As a Friend, he had been, of course, taught from his childhood to regard all war as unchristian. But this tenet became to him something far more than one of the dogmas of an hereditary creed. In proportion as his own spirit was brought under the power of the Gospel, did this tradition which he had received from the fathers deepen into a profound personal conviction. His belief, like that of most of those who share his views, rested not, as is generally but mistakenly represented, upon a literal construction of a few isolated passages of Scripture, but upon what he felt by an instinct of his Christian consciousness to be an essential and irreconcileable antagonism in principle, spirit, and tendency, between a religion of charity and

brotherly love and the whole system of malignity and violence which war inevitably developes. Though it was a matter of genuine and sorrowful surprise to him how those who accepted the New Testament as their rule and faith and practice could reach conclusions so different from his own, he ever desired to cherish his views with perfect charity to others.

'It is a mystery,' he says, in a letter to a friend, 'which I cannot fathom, why those who are equally anxious to act up to the directions and spirit of the New Testament, see so differently as to what these require. Nothing, for instance, has surprised and grieved me more than to witness the views entertained by many on the subject of war, who, I cannot doubt, have made much further advances in the Christian life than I have. But it seems to be the will of Him who is infinite in wisdom, that light upon great subjects should first arise, and be gradually spread, through the faithfulness of *individuals* in acting up to their own convictions. I suppose it was the faithfulness of John Woolman, in reference not only to holding slaves but to the disuse of slave-grown produce, that did more than anything else towards clearing the Society of Friends both of slave-holding and slave-dealing, though he appears to have stood comparatively alone for many years.'

We have already seen that very early in life Mr. Sturge warmly espoused the cause of the Peace Society, and ever after he continued earnestly interested in its principles and operations. But about the time at which we are now arrived, various circumstances combined to call the friends of peace into greater or at least into more public activity. A brief retrospect of events will enable us better to understand the occasion and object of the movement then initiated in which Mr. Sturge bore so prominent a part.

After the long agony of the continental war had been

brought to an end by the peace of 1816, the nation had enjoyed in its foreign relations a period of comparative rest for many years. The sacrifices and sufferings of that terrible conflict were still fresh in men's memories, and served to temper the spirit of strife. The national exhaustion which ensued, and the urgent necessity of attending to questions of domestic policy which had been almost wholly neglected during the war, left to the country little leisure or inclination to engage in foreign quarrels. The Government of the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel was also eminently pacific. In a debate on the affairs of Portugal, which took place in the House of Commons only a few months before the dissolution of that Government, Sir James Mackintosh spoke of 'the strong and growing passion for peace, which, whatever might be the political intrigues of some parties, he rejoiced to say was visibly extending and growing through every nation in Europe, and which, he would add, was the best legacy left us by that fierce war that had raged from Copenhagen to Cadiz.' To this Sir Robert (then Mr.) Peel immediately responded, and begged 'at once to express his cordial concurrence with the sentiments of the right hon. gentleman respecting the blessings and advantages of peace, and his congratulations for the happiness which fifteen years' entire freedom from war—an unusual circumstance in our latter history—had afforded us. 'I do hope,' he added, 'that one great and most beneficial effect of the advance of civilisation, the diffusion of knowledge and the extension of commerce, will be the reducing within their proper dimensions the fame, the merits, and the rewards of military achievements, and that juster notions of the moral dignity of, and of the moral obligation due to, those who apply themselves

to preserve peace and avoid the *éclat* of war, will be the consequence.' When the Whigs came into power in 1830, their accession was regarded as furnishing additional guarantees for a pacific national policy. They had acquired a traditional reputation as the friends of peace, which was confirmed by the passionate philippics on the danger of standing armies and the duty of largely reducing the military establishments which they had scarcely ceased to utter since the peace of 1816. Peace also formed a prominent feature in the political programme they issued on their first assumption of office. 'Our true policy,' said Earl Grey, in the first speech he delivered in the House of Lords as prime minister, 'is to maintain universal peace, and therefore non-interference is the principle, the great principle which ought to be and will be heartily adopted by the present administration.' Nor was the expectation which these promises inspired, disappointed while Earl Grey continued at the head of affairs. But on his retirement a different spirit seemed to influence our Foreign Office. Never did a party more utterly drift away from the professions with which they came into power, than the Whig party did as respects the question of peace during the subsequent six or seven years of their official existence. Whether it was their fault or their misfortune, they seemed destined by some unhappy fatality to embroil us in war or the danger of war in all parts of the world. There was a dispute with America on the subject of the Maine boundary and the right of search, which brought us to the very verge of war. The same may be said of France on the Syrian question, and also on the right of search. It is probable, indeed, that nothing but the timely accession to office of Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen in 1841 saved us from

actual rupture with these two great nations. There was angry jealousy of Russia, which hurried us into foolish and guilty enterprises in India. We had threatened Persia with our displeasure, and there was an armed force in the Persian Gulf. There had been actual war in Syria, and a *quasi*-war in Spain, the Foreign Enlistment Act having been suspended, and an auxiliary Legion raised to fight in the domestic quarrels of that country, while a naval squadron cooperated off the coast. We had been involved in a state of hostilities with the vast empire of China which was not only discreditable in itself, but pregnant with a long progeny of future evils, the end of which is not yet come. In India there was the disgraceful and disastrous expedition to Affghanistan, which led almost inevitably to the subsequent wars in Scinde and in the Punjaub. There were bloody insurrections among our own subjects in Canada and in Ceylon, to say nothing of frequent wars with the aborigines in South Africa and New Zealand. And as the necessary accompaniment of this warlike outbreak, forms and fashions which had happily been in abeyance for many years sprung again into vogue. There were votes of thanks in Parliament to successful warriors, with all that extravagant glorification of military skill and prowess usual on such occasions. There were thanksgiving services in churches and chapels, where Christians met to sing hymns of praise over bloody but 'glorious' victories,

'Hymns to the Father o'er His slaughtered sons.'

Bishops in their lawn sleeves and other ecclesiastical dignitaries came forth to 'consecrate' with Christian prayer and benediction, in the name of the Prince of Peace, the banners that were to float over fields of

strife and carnage. Writers in the public press, especially those in the service of the Government, began to reproduce the old immoral and unchristian paradoxes which represent a state of war as favourable, and the state of peace as unfavourable, to the growth of the higher virtues—paradoxes which are never brought forth except when men have need to reconcile their consciences to their passions.

The tendency of all this was to revive the war spirit, which had, happily, for some years slumbered in this country and in Europe. During the early part of Sir Robert Peel's ministry the elements of discord were to a large extent composed. The presence of Lord Aberdeen at the Foreign Office had served to tranquilise our relations both with the Continent and with America. The great agitation for the repeal of the Corn Laws, impelled and intensified as it was by severe distress at home, compelled that attention to domestic matters which, in periods of prosperity, is apt to give way to a restless propensity to intermeddle in other people's affairs. Towards the close of the Peel administration, as we have seen, difficulties of a serious nature had arisen between this country and both France and America. But most of these had been happily adjusted by Lord Aberdeen before he quitted office. One question, however, was still left to disturb the relations of England and France. This was the question of the Spanish marriages, in respect to which, and the intense excitement it produced on both sides of the Channel, events have since administered to all the parties concerned a rebuke so bitterly ironical. But absurd as the cause of quarrel now appears, and indeed was at any time, it gave rise to intense soreness of feeling, which it was understood was anything but allayed by

the change which took place at that critical moment in the occupancy of the Foreign Office. Advantage was taken of it in both countries by a class of persons whose patriotism takes the form of fear and hatred of other nations, rather than love of their own, to revive and exasperate to the utmost the old hereditary prejudices between England and France. In the latter country there was a great outcry, led on by the Prince de Joinville, for a large increase of the French navy to protect the coasts of France from the overwhelming naval power of England. This was responded to on our side by the first of that series of invasion panics which has since attacked us periodically at certain intervals, like the cholera or other epidemic. Unhappily some of the leaders of the panic persuaded the Duke of Wellington, then in the decline of his powerful intellect, to indite a letter, which straightway became the text on which the alarmists preached incessantly from press and platform. A bad and bitter feeling was growing up between the two nations, or at least between the official classes, diplomatic and military, who were doing their best, by inflammatory articles and letters in the journals, and by loud demands for increased armaments, to inoculate the people of both nations with the same feeling.

It was not without reason, therefore, that the friends of peace, when they saw how the elements of strife had been thus gathering for years in every part of our vast empire, felt that they were called upon to use what influence they could bring to bear to counteract these dangerous tendencies. On the other hand it was hoped, and surely on perfectly rational grounds, that the triumph of free trade, by bringing the nations of the earth more and more into habits of friendly intercourse

and into relations of mutual dependence, would tend greatly to the promotion of peace.* Under the impulse of this double motive, one of fear and the other of hope, the peace party started into increased activity. Their operations were manifold. First, they set themselves to diffuse among the people as widely as they could the Christian doctrines of peace, and to oppose the attempts that were very resolutely made in those days to rekindle the war spirit in the country by appealing to the old feeling of suspicion and hatred against France. Unhappily, the Government, while using language of the friendliest description as respects our relations with our neighbours, gave, nevertheless, an implied sanction to the panic by introducing measures which could only be justified by the presence of some impending danger. At the beginning of 1848, Lord John Russell proposed to Parliament an increase of 5*d.*

* There can be no doubt that the leading men in the anti-corn-law agitation looked to far wider and nobler results of their labour than mere commercial and economical gains, vast as they believed those would be. The following are the words of the greatest of them all:—

'I have never taken a limited view of the object or scope of this great principle. I have been accused of looking too much to material interests. Nevertheless, I can say that I have taken as large a view of the effects of this mighty principle as ever did any man who dreamt over it in his own study. I believe that the physical gain will be the smallest gain to humanity from the success of this principle. I look further; I see in the free-trade principle that which shall act on the moral world as the principle of gravitation in the universe—drawing men together, thrusting aside the antagonism of race, and creed, and language, and uniting us in the bonds of eternal peace. I have looked even further; I have speculated—perhaps I ought to say dreamt—on what the effect of the triumphs of this principle may be in the dim future—aye, a thousand years hence. I believe that the desire and the motive for large and mighty empires, for gigantic armies and great navies, for those materials that are used for the destruction of life and the desolation of the rewards of labour, will die away. I believe that such things will cease to be necessary, or to be used, when man becomes one family, and freely exchanges the fruits of his labour with his brother man.'—Mr. Cobden's Speech at Manchester, Jan. 15, 1846.

in the pound in the income-tax, to enable Government to reorganise the militia and considerably increase the armaments. Mr. Sturge and his associates felt themselves entitled, and indeed imperatively called upon, strenuously to resist this proposal. In addition to the old Peace Society, a special committee was formed, principally by his instigation, called 'The National Defences Committee,' expressly for the purposeof evoking a public feeling against the measures of the Government. The two bodies, however, worked in concert. Meetings were held in all parts of the country. Petitions were sent to Parliament in large numbers, and it soon became pretty clear that the alarmists had failed, as yet, to infect the nation with their own panic fears. The result was, that the Militia Bill had to be withdrawn; and the following year, though in the meanwhile the French revolution had broken out, and Louis Napoleon had been elected President of the new Republic, the ministers appeared before Parliament with the declaration that 'large *reductions* had been made on the estimates of last year.'

About the same time the friends of peace began another movement of a more definite nature. All history attests that wars often break out, not because the differences which must sometimes arise in the intercourse of nations as of individuals are incapable of a pacific solution, but because no provision has been made for referring the matters in dispute to any other than the blind and brutal arbitration of the sword. Ample as are the arrangements made under the constitution of civil society for adjusting the conflicting claims of its members, without which, indeed, no society could exist for a day, in the great commonwealth of nations no foresight is exercised, no precaution is taken, but every-

thing is left to the excited passions and hazardous accidents of the moment.

The friends of peace had frequently before petitioned Parliament and memorialised our own and other governments in favour of arbitration, as a means of settling international disputes. But there had been great difficulty in bringing the matter in a distinct form before the attention of the legislature. The official class, trained in other traditions and with a mortal dread of innovation, clung with great tenacity to the belief that when the negotiations of diplomacy had once failed there was no other resource possible but the *ultima ratio regum*. It was natural enough, no doubt, that they should deem themselves more competent judges of such matters than the rest of mankind, and be inclined to resent the intrusion of anyone else within the charmed circle where they held sway, as an impertinent reflection on their own superior wisdom and experience. It was their cue, therefore, to throw an air of ridicule upon all propositions involving a departure from their precedents, and to brand them as the offspring of, it may be an amiable, but still an utterly utopian philanthropy. Under these circumstances it was not easy to find a person with sufficient moral courage to introduce a motion in Parliament on this question. Mr. Cobden, however, who has an uncourtly habit of exercising an independent judgment upon most subjects, did not shrink from this duty. Towards the close of 1848 he gave notice of his intention to propose, during the next session, a resolution for

'An humble address to Her Majesty, praying that she will be graciously pleased to direct her principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to enter into communication with foreign powers, inviting them to concur in treaties binding

the respective parties, in the event of any future misunderstanding which cannot be arranged by amicable negotiation, to refer the matter in dispute to the decision of arbitrators.'

This gave the peace party an opportunity, of which they earnestly availed themselves, to bring the subject of arbitration before the attention of the British public. The appeal to the country was eminently successful. Crowded meetings were held in all parts of the kingdom, at which petitions to Parliament in favour of the motion were adopted with singular unanimity and enthusiasm. Mr. Cobden, referring to this in a letter to Mr. Sturge, says:—

'I have been delighted with the success of your meetings. You peace people seem to be the only men who have courage just now to call a public meeting. I always say that there is more real pluck in the ranks of the Quakers than in all our regiments of redcoats. . . . What progress has been made in public opinion during the last twelvemonths. . . . Much of it is due to the efforts of your Peace Society. In fact, all good things pull together. Free trade, peace, financial reform, equitable taxation, all are cooperating towards a common object.'

And although the first announcement by Mr. Cobden of his intention to bring the question forward was received by the House with a general laugh, yet so unequivocally had public opinion pronounced itself in the meanwhile, that when the night for the discussion arrived, hon. gentlemen had entirely lost their disposition to laugh, and after a long, serious, and able debate, no fewer than seventy-nine votes, including those of the representatives of nearly all the largest constituencies in the kingdom, were recorded in its favour.

There was a third method of operation adopted by the friends of peace at the time of which we are now

speaking. Feeling that much of the prejudice and alienation existing between nations arose from pure ignorance of each other, and that it would be of the utmost value in promoting practical measures tending to peace to enlist the public opinions of the different countries of Europe at the same time in their favour, it was resolved that an attempt should be made to invade the continent with the propagandism of peace. The revolution of 1848 had served to awaken and diffuse a large amount of sympathy among the *peoples* of Europe, and to give them a dim perception of the great Christian doctrine of the universal brotherhood of man. The time, therefore, was not unpropitious for the experiment. Just at that moment, too, Mr. Elihu Burritt, who had already distinguished himself in America by his writings on peace, visited this country; and full of generous ardour on behalf of these ideas, he proposed to Mr. Sturge and others that the friends of peace should hold an international congress in Paris. In the summer of 1848 he proceeded alone to that city, intent upon accomplishing this purpose. Circumstances, however, rendered it desirable that for that year the attempt should be made at Brussels rather than in Paris. The proposal to make their capital the seat of the first Peace Congress was received by the Belgian Government and people with the utmost cordiality. A number of Belgian gentlemen, at the head of whom was M. Auguste Visschers, who has since acquired a European reputation as a *savant* and philanthropist, formed themselves into a committee to cooperate with the deputation sent from England. The meeting was held on the 20th, 21st, and 22nd of September, under the presidency of M. Visschers, and was in all respects eminently successful and satisfactory. We are not now writing the history of the peace

movement, and cannot, therefore, enter into a detailed account of that series of remarkable assemblies of which this at Brussels was the first. Suffice it to say, that for several years in succession the Peace Congress held its annual session, first in Paris, then in Frankfort, London, Manchester, Edinburgh, with an ever-increasing number of adherents. At the meeting in Paris, presided over by Victor Hugo, the large room (Salle de St. Cécile) in the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, capable of accommodating nearly 2,000 persons, was crowded day by day by delegates representing nearly every country in Europe, and several in America. The same may be said of that at Frankfort, which was held in the noble Church of St. Paul's, kindly placed at the disposal of the Congress by the Consistory of the Lutheran Church, and of which Councillor Jaup, formerly prime minister of Hesse-Darmstadt, was the president; while the meeting in London in 1851, under the presidency of Sir David Brewster, was still more numerously attended. The object of these assemblies was not—as it is the pleasure of those to represent who feel it to be their interest or duty always to decry and ridicule such movements—to proclaim the advent of a millennium of universal peace. They sprung from a precisely opposite conviction, the conviction that unless some measures were taken by governments and peoples, during the lucid interval of comparative European peace they were then enjoying, to provide some other means than the sword for the adjustment of international difficulties, and to reduce the standing armaments which were growing with such ominous rapidity during peace, there was the most imminent danger that Europe would, ere long, be again dragged into the vortex of war. They met, not to indulge in premature and sentimental felicita-

tions on the extinction of the evil, but to stimulate each other to labour in their respective countries, and according to the measure of their influence and ability, in support of taking such precautions as might lessen the probability of its recurrence. To this end they recommended that arbitration treaties should be formed between nations, which might gradually develop and ripen into something like a court and congress of nations; that the principle of non-intervention should be universally adopted; that Governments should come to an understanding for a mutual and simultaneous reduction of their armaments; that all encouragement should be given to the improvement of international communication, the extension of postal reform, the adoption of the same standard of weights, measures, and coinage; that those engaged in the education of youth, ministers of religion, and the conductors of the public press, should be exhorted to use their influence to eradicate from the minds of men those political prejudices and hereditary hatreds which have so often been the cause of war, and to diffuse sentiments of peace and good-will among the people. Such were the objects of the Peace Congress. Many of the foremost men in Europe gave it their sanction and encouragement, and it contributed largely, beyond doubt, to lift into European notice and discussion certain great principles of religion and humanity which had been too long neglected, and which cannot fail ultimately to bear fruit in the relation of nations. It is true, also, unquestionably, that it afforded ample occasion for the sceptic and the scorner to exercise their peculiar gifts. Nor can it be denied that the outbreak of the Russian war, in 1854, by letting out the waters of strife which have since so abundantly deluged the world, and putting a stop, at least for a time, to the exertions of the Peace

Congress, gave to this class a great temporary triumph, to their own high satisfaction, if we may judge by their tone; but whether to the advantage of Europe, or the general happiness of mankind, it may be permitted us to question.

We have thought this brief sketch of the peace movement necessary, by way of explaining the allusions made in Mr. Sturge's correspondence, from which we shall have occasion immediately to present the reader with a few extracts. But no extracts from letters can give any adequate impression of the part he bore in the work of which we have been speaking. Indeed, for several years of his life—from 1848 to 1854—a large proportion of his time, energies, and influence were devoted to it, and around no one's personal history could the movement be made to revolve with greater propriety than around his. For he was to a large extent its animating spirit. It was at the period to which we now refer that the biographer was first brought into intimate personal relations with Mr. Sturge. Having become secretary to the Peace Society in 1848, just at the commencement of that series of special operations we have just attempted to describe, a good deal of the labour and responsibility connected with them necessarily devolved upon him. He was, therefore, in a position to understand well the extent and value of Mr. Sturge's services. And, in truth, it would be difficult to exaggerate them. His activity of body and mind was marvellous. As the poet says of another character, 'He was a man of an unsleeping spirit;' nor was it easy for anyone engaged in the same enterprise with him to slumber at his post. Not that there was anything fussy or dictatorial in his manner, but that the contagion of his earnestness communicated itself to all those around

him. Who could complain of being stimulated to exertion by one who was willing himself to bear so large a share of the burden of labour? Whatever the department of service in which his aid was required, it was rendered with equal cheerfulness and promptitude. The slightest intimation that his presence would be useful in London brought him up at once from Birmingham, and with no less readiness he would speed to any part of the kingdom to attend a public meeting or to confer with some important friend of the cause. If funds were required to carry on the agitation, his hand was ever 'open as day,' while his application to others—from which, though not a very pleasant duty, he never shrunk—few could be found to resist, coming from one who was known to testify his own value of the cause on whose behalf he pleaded by such large sacrifices of time, labour, and money. But more valuable than all to those associated with him were those moral qualities of character by which he was distinguished; his calm courage springing from unfaltering faith in the truth and power of great principles; the habitual serenity of temper which no excitement or provocation could seriously ruffle; the utter self-forgetfulness which never intruded the susceptibilities of personal vanity to disturb the conduct of a great enterprise; and the sunny cheerfulness of mind which seldom failed to light up the less sanguine spirits of some of his associates with a ray of hope in the darkest hour of discouragement and gloom. He had, moreover, the rare and inexpressibly valuable power of inspiring undoubting confidence in the purity and simplicity of his own motives, which drew men towards him with a sort of instinctive and child-like trust. It was curious to observe during those congresses in foreign countries, which brought together

many hundreds of persons from all parts of the kingdom, how, without any obtrusion of himself into prominence, all the company would cluster around Joseph Sturge as their natural leader, just as the swarm clusters around the queen bee.

In introducing the following extract from a letter to Mr. Tappan, dated November 17, 1848, it is necessary to premise that the allusion in the first sentence is to another of those critical conjunctures in business to which those engaged in large mercantile affairs are liable :—

'Though the effects of the storm last year are still seriously felt by me in pecuniary matters, yet as the anxiety from this source is now comparatively light, and, I hope, decreasing, I have felt at liberty to give up a good deal of time to the Peace movement. I sent thee, some time since, a copy of the "Herald of Peace," with a tolerable account of the proceedings of the Peace Congress at Brussels. I hope to send thee, next week, an account of our meetings in London, Birmingham, and Manchester. R. Cobden enters warmly into that part of the movement relating to Arbitration Treaties, and has consented to bring the question forward in Parliament early next session—probably in the shape of a motion for an address to the Crown, to instruct her foreign minister to negotiate arbitration treaties with the different Governments of Europe and America. From the manner in which Lord John Russell replied the other day to Elihu Burritt, when the deputation waited upon him from the Peace Congress, we think it not at all improbable that he will not oppose such a measure, if he does not positively support it, and the feeling of the public in this country is very ripe in its favour.'

The allusion to Lord John Russell is more fully explained in another letter to the same friend :—

'I think I named to thee, in a former letter, that in the interview our deputation had with Lord John Russell, in

presenting to him the Peace Congress address, Elihu Burritt mentioned the fact that the United States Government had included, in their late treaty with Mexico, a clause by which all future differences should be left to arbitration; and Lord John's remark in reply was, as nearly as I can remember, in these words:—"If your (the American) Government will make a similar proposition to ours, it shall be taken into most serious consideration." Now, I observed upon this afterwards, that getting this remark from Lord John was, in my opinion, of itself worth all the trouble of the Congress, and urged Elihu Burritt to use all the exertions he could to induce your Government to make such a proposition. Now, I attach such immense importance to this point being pushed, that I do not think there is anything to which thou couldst devote a part of thy time that would more conduce to the benefit of the human family, and if thou couldst to put some machinery in motion to induce your Cabinet to take the matter into favourable consideration. Thou wilt of course be better able to judge than I am, both as to the practicability of doing this, and, if practicable, as to the best means of accomplishing it. I am the more anxious to see a movement in favour of this on your side of the water as soon as possible, because we are now exerting ourselves to bring all the public support we can to a motion which Richard Cobden has determined to bring forward, early next session, in favour of international arbitration. In a letter to me, R. Cobden says:—"If a sufficient pressure of opinion can be brought to bear upon the members, I do not see why the motion should fail even in the next session. The carrying it I should regard as the most important step ever taken in the direction of universal peace." We are trying to raise a fund of 5,000*l.* to defray the expenses of supporting the motion, and other matters arising out of the Peace Congress.'

To the same effect, writing to the Rev. John Clark of Jamaica in the early part of 1849, he says:—

'I find the Peace question occupy all the time I can spare,

and the public feeling appears so ripe for carrying it forward, that it seems as though one could, at the present moment, do as much or more to serve the human family in this direction as in any other.'

Again, referring to the second meeting of the Congress that was to be held in Paris, he writes to Mr. Tappan:—

'We are now looking forward to the Peace Congress in Paris next month. A large number of persons in England and Scotland have already expressed their intention of going. I hope the effect of it may be at least to turn the attention of the people a little more to a substitute for armed force in the settlement of international disputes. With all my love for an equality of political rights, it almost shakes my confidence in the good working of it when I contemplate the state of slavery in your land, and the sympathy of the free States with the slaveholders, and also the warlike spirit of the great bulk of your people. The leader of your armies in the atrocious war against Mexico seems about as popular among your citizens as our Duke of Wellington or the generals who have committed such wholesale slaughter in India and China are amongst our aristocracy. Indeed, I believe that, bad as we are, peace principles have made more progress in this country than in yours.'

One or two extracts from letters to Mr. Whittier shall conclude this selection. Under date of April 20, 1849, he writes to this friend:—

'Thou wilt probably have seen, from time to time, a little of our proceedings on the Peace question in this country, especially through Elihu Burritt and the "Christian Citizen." The motion of R. Cobden, on International Arbitration, has been deferred in the House of Commons through unavoidable circumstances; but it is becoming so popular in the country, that I expect there will be a very respectable number of members voting for it. Elihu Burritt, and Henry Richard, the Secretary of the Peace Society, are gone to Paris to make

preparations for a Peace Congress to be held there in the eighth month. We are very anxious there should be a *good* delegation from the United States, and I hope thou wilt be one of them. I think the voyage would be very beneficial to thy health, and, besides other things, would probably amply repay thee for the trouble and sacrifice. As it is likely Lamartine will take a part in the Congress, and Richard Cobden has agreed to be present, the thing is becoming so popular here that it will be difficult, I expect, to limit the English delegation within moderate bounds. The prejudice between Englishmen and Frenchmen seems giving way rapidly, and to be replaced by a disposition to vie with each other as to which will show the greatest hospitality and kindness when they visit each other's countries.'

To the same friend he writes on April 5, 1850 :—

'Although I believe I have acknowledged thy last welcome letter, yet I drop a line to enquire whether there is any chance of our seeing thee at the Frankfort Peace Congress. I understand that a goodly number are likely to come from the United States, and I shall be truly glad to see thee of the number, especially as I quite believe it would be a permanent benefit to thy health. Richard Cobden intends to bring forward two motions this session on the Peace question, one in favour of mutual disarmament, and the other a repetition of his motion last year on Arbitration. The Anti-slavery question in your country seems now the chief point of interest, and notwithstanding the shameful desertion of the cause by Daniel Webster, I cannot but feel a sanguine hope that its onward progress will not be arrested. Indeed, I think it has obtained too firm a hold of the national mind in the Northern States to be much injured even by such a man as Webster.'

CHAPTER XXI.

MEDIATION BETWEEN DENMARK AND SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN.

Appearance of Dr. Bodenstedt at the Frankfort Peace Congress—His Proposal to that Body—Could not be entertained—Mr. Sturge determines to visit the Scene of War himself—Mr. E. Burritt and Mr. F. Wheeler accompany him—Nature of their Intervention—Journey to Kiel and Rendsburg—Interview with the Authorities of the Duchies—They accept the Principle of Arbitration—Mr. Sturge and his Companions proceed to Copenhagen—Interview with Count Molcke, the Prime Minister—With the Baron De Reedtz, Foreign Secretary—Results of these Conferences—Visit to the Duke of Augustenburg—Conversation with the Duchess—Second Interview with the Authorities at Rendsburg—Hopeful Aspect of the Negotiation—But ultimately fails.

But out of the Congress held at Frankfort in 1850, there sprung an episode of a nature so peculiarly interesting, and one in which Mr. Sturge was so intimately concerned, as to demand a fuller record at our hands. At that time the question between Denmark and the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein, which has since occasioned so much anxiety to Europe, had just been referred to the arbitrament of the sword. Hostilities had already actually commenced, and the two parties stood still confronting each other in battle array. Among the delegates who had come to Paris to represent Germany in the Congress of the preceding year, was Dr. Bodenstedt of Berlin, a gentleman who had already attained a considerable literary reputation in his own country, and had borne a rather prominent part in liberal politics in Prussia. On the third day of the sittings of

the Frankfort Congress, this gentleman appeared in the tribune with a document in his hand, signed by all the leading men of the constitutional party in Berlin as well as by the ambassador of Schleswig-Holstein in that city, entreating the Congress to appoint a commission of enquiry into the matters at issue between Denmark and the Duchies, with a view to a settlement of the case by arbitration. But among the standing orders of the Congress was one enjoining every speaker 'to avoid digressions to present political events.' This obliged the president to interpose before Dr. Bodenstedt could fully develop the proposal of which he was the bearer. Imperfect, however, as was the representation of his case which he was permitted to make, the few words he uttered were so touching, his whole aspect was so earnest, and his voice was so tremulous with deep emotion, that they reached the heart and brought tears into the eyes of not a few in that assembly. There can be no doubt that the Congress decided wisely in refusing in its corporate capacity to undertake a political mission of such extreme difficulty and delicacy as would have been an official mediation on its part between Denmark and the Duchies, especially at the solicitation of only one of the belligerent parties. Still, there were some of those present, conversant with all the circumstances of Dr. Bodenstedt's mission, who felt a painful degree of sympathy with his disappointment, and revolved the possibility of something being attempted, not indeed in the name of the Congress, but by any of the members in their private capacity, and acting solely on their own responsibility. Foremost among these was Mr. Sturge, whose heart yearned over the affecting picture of the miseries of that unnatural war which had been drawn by Dr. Bodenstedt. Mr. Elihu Burritt and the writer of

this memoir, having had much previous correspondence and intercourse with the doctor, strongly sympathised with Mr. Sturge.

The latter also received communications from two distinct and influential sources, strenuously encouraging the attempt of a private mediation. One of these gentlemen said, in a letter to Mr. Sturge :—

'I have just had an interview with Dr. Bodenstedt, who gives me the fullest assurance, which he says he has high authority to give, that the leading men of Schleswig-Holstein would receive in the kindest manner, and would be willing to communicate with, any party of private English gentlemen, members of the Peace Congress, coming in the interests of peace and with the view to stop or suspend hostilities. He also desires that the Schleswig-Holstein ambassador in Frankfort (M. Von Stegman) should be called on, and he would provide those parties who are willing to undertake the errand of peace with the necessary information and with letters of introduction. The deputation, proceeding by way of Berlin, should also call on Dr. Bodenstedt. He would introduce them to the agents of the Schleswig-Holstein Government and to other influential people, who would give them every possible assistance. Nothing but good can proceed from such an attempt at practical peace making.'

Accordingly, a few days after the Congress, Mr. Sturge, Mr. Burritt, and Mr. Richard, accompanied by Dr. Varrantrapp, the German secretary of the Congress and one of the most benevolent and generous-hearted of men, waited upon the ambassador of the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein resident in Frankfort, in order to ascertain his views on the subject. This gentleman signified his readiness to do the utmost in his power to promote their object, and assured them that his Government would regard with the most favourable disposition their disinterested efforts for the restoration of peace. This

decided Mr. Sturge and his two friends to proceed at once through Berlin to Schleswig-Holstein, and should Providence seem to open the way, thence to Denmark. But duties of a very urgent nature connected with the Peace Society and the Peace Congress Society, to both of which he was secretary, obliged the biographer, at the last moment, very reluctantly to relinquish his purpose of accompanying the deputation. His place was therefore taken by Mr. Frederick Wheeler of Rochester, who by his intelligence and earnest sympathy with the object was well qualified to take part in the mission. It never entered into the minds of these gentlemen to offer *themselves* as mediators, or to pronounce any judgment whatever upon the matters in dispute between Denmark and the Duchies. Their sole object was to induce the belligerents to consent to submit the questions at issue to impartial and competent arbitrators to be mutually agreed upon by themselves. To obviate all misapprehension on this point they embodied their views in the following written statement, which they proposed to present to the two Governments as the whole ground and scope of their interference :—

'On the morning of the last session of the Peace Congress at Frankfort, a gentleman of high respectability from Berlin applied to the bureau for permission to read to the Congress a memorial signed by several distinguished individuals of that city. This memorial requested the Congress to investigate the merits of the controversy pending between the duchies of Schleswig-Holstein and the kingdom of Denmark. On consideration it was decided that the Congress could not enter upon such an investigation without violating one of the rules which it had adopted for the regulation of its proceedings, and which proscribed any direct allusion to the political events of the day. Nevertheless many of the members of the Congress, from different countries, were inspired with an

earnest desire that no favourable opportunity should be lost for interposing pacific counsels between the contending parties, with the hope of preventing the further effusion of blood and of promoting an amicable adjustment of the difference.

'Entertaining this hope, and disclaiming all intention of entering into the merits of the case, the undersigned have ventured solely on their individual responsibility to proceed to the theatre of the contest for the purpose of entreating the contending parties to refer the whole question to the decision of enlightened arbitrators, and thus to spare themselves the further infliction of the calamities and horrors of a war which can never satisfactorily settle the matter in dispute, and which is contemplated with pain and sorrow by the friends of religion and humanity throughout the world.

'Signed by JOSEPH STURGE, Birmingham, England.
ELIHU BURRITT, Worcester, United States.
FREDERIC WHEELER, Rochester, England.

They had a great advantage in making this appeal from the fact that in a treaty of alliance between Denmark and the Duchies, bearing date 1533, which was renewed in 1623, and confirmed at Tavendhall in 1700, there was a clause which provided that, 'with respect to any differences that might arise between them they agreed to adjust them, *not* by means of arms, but by means of councillors, constituted as arbitrators, on the part of each, and disengaged from their oath of allegiance.'

The three ambassadors of peace, armed with no commission or authority from any human power, nevertheless proceeded on their way with that courage which a high faith inspires. They first presented themselves at Rendsburg, the principal fortress in Holstein, and then the seat of the executive of the Schleswig-Holstein Government, and were received by the stadtholders and other members of the Government with the utmost

courtesy and respect, and having secured their consent to *the principle* of referring the question in dispute to arbitration, they went on to Copenhagen. The Danish Government received them with no less respect and courtesy. Happily, we have in our possession very ample details of the journey, and of the interviews with the two Governments, in a series of letters which Mr. Sturge wrote to his own family. We are greatly mistaken if the extracts we are about to present from those letters do not deeply interest the reader.

Journey to Kiel and Rendsburg.

'Klempenberg, near Copenhagen: September 6, 1850.

'I have been so incessantly engaged since I left Berlin, and indeed I might say since I left home, that I have been unable to give even a brief outline of our journey and proceedings. I will, however, conclude, that up to the time we parted with our company at Cologne, thou wilt be fully informed of our proceedings either through Dickinson or our friends G. and A. M. Goodrich. I mentioned in former letters which I hope have reached thee, that after parting with our company we returned by steamer to Bonn to get a little rest, and also to see Joseph Newberg, who had urged us at Frankfort to proceed on this mission, and who, from being at Nottingham at the time of my contesting the election there with Walter, knew me by character. We spent several hours there with him, and he was to write to Berlin on the subject. I found this rest very refreshing, and on our return to Cologne that evening, we found Elihu Burritt and Henry Richard, and after consulting with them we parted with the latter, and started by railway for Berlin, by way of Dusseldorf, Hanover, Brunswick, Magdeburg, Brandenburg, and Potsdam. The distance is above 400 English miles, and we performed the journey in about twenty-four hours, including several rather long stoppages and change of carriages. We travelled in second class

carriages, which are quite equal and in some respects superior to English first class; but the practice of smoking is so universal in carriages of all classes, that a gentleman will not hesitate to light and smoke his cigar with a lady sitting opposite to him, and the latter evidently thinks it no act of rudeness or discourtesy. At Berlin a number of the military were stationed at the railway with fixed bayonets, which made them look rather formidable, to examine our passports. I had obtained one from Frankfort, and E. Burritt had one before; but F. Wheeler produced one a year or two old which rather puzzled the officer who examined it, but on producing his Peace Congress ticket it put all right, and we each received a ticket to pass the barrier into the city. All these things have now become very much a matter of form, but are very troublesome, and it was near eleven o'clock before we arrived at the Hôtel de Russie. We intended on first day (Sunday) to rest, and only to seek an interview with Dr. Bodenstedt. E. Burritt called upon him to let him know we were arrived. He appointed to come and see us at one o'clock, and in the meantime we read a chapter and sat down in silence together. We found there was no hope of keeping our mission secret, as a telegraphic message from the ambassador of the Duchies at Frankfort, announcing our intended visit, had already got into the Berlin papers. Dr. Bodenstedt had, before he came to us, seen several parties, and we were called upon by the ambassador from the Duchies, Baron Liliencron, the attorney-general of Berlin, Herr Von Holzendorff, and a Professor Forckhammer from Kiel; the latter could talk English, was well acquainted with a former correspondent in business of ours (now dead) of the name of Birch, who was the British consul there. As these gentlemen furnished us with all the information we wanted, letters, &c., and we were become, contrary to our wishes and intentions, objects of notoriety, we concluded to proceed at seven o'clock the next morning to Hamburg, notwithstanding a pressing invitation to meet a large party in Berlin the next day, but which we think our Berlin friends saw the propriety of our declining. The distance from Berlin to Hamburg is above 200 miles, but a railway all

the way brought us without change of luggage to the latter place a little before four o'clock; and we found, by getting to Altona by five o'clock, we could get to Kiel (the seat of the Duchies Government in time of peace) that night by railway, but understood that we must have an order from the commandant of Altona, which is within the territories of the Duchies, for permission to go. On arrival at his office we found he was not within, but we were assured we might proceed; and when we got to the railway-station Professor Worms came and spoke to us, guessing who we were, and said that he had had a telegraphic message from, I think, the ambassador at Berlin, the Baron Liliencron, to ask him to give us all the assistance in his power, and that though he had returned from Kiel that day, he was ready to accompany us at once there again. This was a great encouragement to us, as Professor Worms spoke English fluently, and was well acquainted with Geo. W. Alexander, and W. Forster, and Jno. Barry. We took, as usual, second class places, but found ourselves placed in first class alone with Professor Worms, who intimated that the director of the railway already knew our mission, and had done so to show his sense of it. We found that Professor Worms, being a German, was a zealous friend of the cause of the Duchies, and as he and his wife and friends had greatly exerted themselves in supplying the wounded, a great part of whom were placed at Altona, with linen, clothes, medicines, &c., he of course stood well with the authorities at Kiel and Rendsburg. On our road to Kiel, where we arrived about half-past eight o'clock, we had a pretty full opportunity of explaining to him our views and taking his advice, especially as regards the document which we had concluded to present both to the authorities of the Duchies and of Denmark, if we should go to and be received by the latter. He concurred in the propriety of drawing up such a paper, but that it should be confined to a simple recommendation of arbitration, and that we were right in declining to enter into the merits of the case with either party, and in assuming a strictly impartial attitude.

'On arrival at Kiel we found the Baron Arnim, a friend of

Professor Worms, was going to Rendsburg early next morning. This is the strong fortress of the Duchies, and where the stadtholders reside during the war. We concluded to send by him our written statement, and a message to say we intended to wait upon them the following day (the fourth, this being the night of the second). The third day we employed before four o'clock in calling upon the president of the Assembly, the burgomaster, a number of the members of the Assembly, several merchants, one or two parties connected with the public press, &c., to whom, to prevent the possibility of any mistake as to the object of our mission, we generally read the document that we had sent to the stadtholder. We were in every case most cordially received, and though all the parties were exasperated in the highest degree at the conduct of the Danes, and appeared ready to shed, as they said, all their blood and treasure in defence of their rights, they were, without a single exception, willing to leave the matter to a fair arbitration before an impartial tribunal, and most of them expressed an earnest desire to get out of the hands of the diplomatists. This state of public feeling we think most important, as the Government is entirely dependent upon it for its power to act, and could only do so with the sanction of the assembly, which we found was to meet next week. Two or three members of the Assembly came to dine with us at our hotel. At four o'clock, one of them, a medical man of influence and eminence, who could talk English, after dinner took us to his country house, most beautifully situated, and introduced us to his wife and daughter, and afterwards took us in his carriage to an eminence from which we could distinctly see three Danish and three Russian men-of-war and a Russian war steamer cruising outside of Kiel harbour. I now come to the fourth day, the fourth instant, which, if it should lead to the termination of this lamentable war, we shall all look upon as the most eventful day of our lives. As we found we could go in a little *less* time through the country to Rendsburg in a land carriage than by the circuitous route by railway, we concluded upon the former, and started, accompanied by Professor Worms and an influential member

of the Assembly. Most of the country we passed through is fertile as well as highly cultivated, and as yet has altogether escaped the ravages of war. Many of the farm houses have evidently been built for ages, and it was melancholy to think that if this war could not be put a stop to, the scene of comfort and plenty through which we passed might shortly be converted into a desolate wilderness. There are some peculiar features I never saw before in the buildings on these small farms. The residence, the barn, the stables, and cowsheds are all under one roof, the entrance to the former as well as the latter being through the barn door. The whole is covered with a beautifully neat straw thatch, and on one end of the roof we often saw an enormous crane's nest, a bird which they shelter and protect as useful in the destruction of carrion, &c. It was agreed that we should call at a farm house on the way, both for the purpose of refreshing the horses and to give us an opportunity of seeing the interior, but when we stopped at the door, Professor Worms, who was on the box, found he had made a mistake as to the particular farm he meant to take us to. But the proprietor who came to the door received us not the less kindly, and at once showed us through his kitchen, dairy, barns, cowsheds, &c. Though he called the farm a small farm, it was, as well as I could gather, 340 acres, his own land. He kept ninety cows to make butter, which was churned by horse power, and all connected with the process was beautifully clean. While we were engaged in our inspection, the mistress of the family, who could talk a little English, had ordered the horses taken out to be fed, and had prepared us a second breakfast. She appeared a well educated and very clever woman, knew something of a daughter of our old acquaintance Birch, and seemed not a little pleased at the mistake which had brought us to their house.

Interview with the Schleswig-Holstein Authorities.

'We did not arrive at Rendsburg until after twelve o'clock. On getting within about two miles of it we came to some of the encampments. Most of the tents were made of wood and

straw—the latter said to be most comfortable. In one or two places the men were being exercised; in some others they were in an undress, amusing themselves. We were, I think, on three several occasions stopped to show our passports; but as we had a member of Assembly (who had then changed with Professor Worms) on the box with an official card, we were immediately allowed to pass. After passing the bridge into the fortress, we drove to an hotel in a large square opposite to the Government offices, and without much delay proceeded to the latter, accompanied by Professor Worms, who through mistake took us to a room at which neither servant nor sentinel was stationed, but on opening the door of which we saw the two stadtholders, Count F. Reventlow and Herr Beseler; the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Charles Francke; and General Krolme, the Secretary of War, together with the member of Assembly who had accompanied us from Kiel. Finding we had abruptly and unexpectedly opened the door, we drew back; but they requested us to walk in, and when we were seated, I was looked to for an explanation. I felt embarrassed, both by the novelty of my position and the great importance connected with this critical point of our mission; and after I had briefly and imperfectly stated our object, which the Minister of War, who could speak English, explained to the rest, I asked Professor Worms to read, in German, the statement we had prepared. E. Burritt and F. Wheeler and I then added some further remarks. E. B. especially alluded to the ancient treaty between them and the Danes, binding them to submit matters in dispute between them to arbitration. I told them that we should not have presumed to have presented ourselves before them but for the memorial from Berlin, and the conviction that we had the sympathy of the great majority of the Congress; that though we did not know how we might be received by the Danish authorities, we were wishing to proceed to Copenhagen, and hoped we should do no harm if we should do no good. After some conversation in German, the Minister of Foreign Affairs stated to us, in English, the substance of what is contained in the annexed memorandum, the accuracy of which, after it

was reduced to writing, was confirmed by him and both the stadtholders.* At the conclusion of the interview, the stadtholder Beseler requested Professor Worms to say, on behalf of himself and his colleagues, that they were anxious to assure us that, though he and his colleagues had replied somewhat cautiously to our suggestion, yet they fully appreciated the "meritorious motives" which had led to our visit. On taking leave, he asked us to dine with them at three o'clock—an invitation we felt that we could not refuse. In the anteroom, before dinner, we were introduced to the Duke of Augustenburg and his eldest son. The former is the uncle of the King of Denmark, and the latter the heir of the crown after his father, in case of the death of the present king and an elder uncle, both of whom have no children. At dinner the stadtholder requested me to sit next to the duke, who was in full uniform. He had been to England thirty years ago, and could speak English tolerably well. The Government of his nephew, the present King of Denmark, have taken possession of his domains in the island of Alsen, sold his favourite stud of horses, and removed his plate to Copenhagen. He and the duchess and their family have removed to the neighbourhood of Hamburg, and he gave me a cordial invitation to come and see them there. The company, which consisted of about twenty-five, was a striking and interesting one. On my right sat a professor from Berlin, who could talk English, and to whom, in answer to some question, I endeavoured to explain, as well as to one or two others who understood English, my views on the Christian ground of the unlawfulness of war and the inviolability of human life. The duke also noticed my refusal to take wine, and I had an opportunity of explaining our reasons for doing so. To show the

* 'M. Francke stated to the effect, that it was quite impossible for the Government of the Duchies to make any proposition, and that we must distinctly understand that we had no mission from them to the Danish Government. The stadtholder (M. Beseler) then stated, that they should be willing to refer the claims of the Duchies to the decision of enlightened and impartial arbitrators, provided Denmark would also submit *its* claims to the same tribunal, reserving for eventual arrangement the appointment, composition, and jurisdiction of the court.'

lamentable nature of this unnatural war, a gentleman who sat opposite to me at table was the *brother* of the general of the Danish army, while he had four sons in the Holstein army; so that, if this war is not put a stop to, some of them will probably be killed in battle by orders given by their own uncle—a case similar to my giving orders to shoot Charles's or Edmund's children! Indeed, I am told that there are brothers of the *same* family in each army; and yet it was but too evident that, from the highest to the lowest, the Holsteiners are anxious for another battle, and to die rather than be beaten. The only Englishman we met at dinner there, I am sorry to say, seemed trying to inflame this feeling. He spoke of the "infernal Danes;" and when I parted with him, said, by the time we returned from Denmark, it was likely they would be "at it again," meaning another battle. They wished us to see more of the camps and the army before we returned; but it was too late for this, and a member of the Government and one of the members of Assembly rode before us on our return through all the points guarded by soldiers where we were likely to be stopped, and parted with us in the most cordial manner. We returned to Kiel with Professor Worms, but did not arrive there until after midnight. We found that, by posting yesterday across the country to Stravemünde, we might possibly catch the boat from Lubeck to Copenhagen. This we resolved to attempt to do; and, after parting with Professor Worms early yesterday morning, we started for that purpose, but, from the badness of the roads and the slow driving, we found we should be too late unless we could increase the speed. This we succeeded in doing by offering a double fee to the driver, and happily arrived about a quarter of an hour before the boat started, which we found a very good and commodious one; and as the weather was fine, with very little wind, I went to bed very early, and had more sleep than on shore for many nights past. We arrived here about ten o'clock, and though, as we expected, we are placed in quarantine for five days, it is allowed to reckon from the time we started, and is in such a beautiful spot on the seaside, with sufficient food and comfortable accommo-

dation, that we have been amused to hear our colleague, E. Burritt, say that he should like to stop here to get up his writing, &c. I might perhaps say so, too, if I had no one at home I was anxious to see. We have forwarded a letter to the English ambassador to ask him to try to get us released; but if he does not, as we get liberated by third day in course, and we shall not lose more than two or three days by it, as first day intervenes. There are about forty of us in similar circumstances; and in the boat we came on shore in, though containing only twelve passengers, there were seven different nations represented.

'Very affectionately, thy

'J. S.

'Notwithstanding the rapidity of our progress, we find a knowledge of our mission has gone here before us, and we have reason to believe we shall be most courteously received by the Danish Government.'

Interview with the Danish Ministers.

'Copenhagen: 9 mo: 16, 1850.

'I forwarded a letter from here on the 11th instant, and at eleven o'clock that day we had an interview alone with the Prime Minister, the Count A. W. Molcke, for more than half an hour, when I read to him a statement we had previously drawn up of our reasons for asking the interview, including the outline of the result of our visit to Kiel and Rendsburg, and the reply of the Government of the Duchies. I stated that though those we called upon seemed determined to resist force by force to the last extremity, they all, without a single exception, were ready to leave the whole matter in dispute to fair and impartial arbitration; quoted the former treaty between Denmark and the Duchies, binding them to refer all disputes between them, not to the decision of the sword, but to arbitration; and concluded by saying that "though we came as private individuals, connected with no political authority, we knew that we represented the convictions and sympathies of

millions, both on this and the other side of the Atlantic, and we entreated the Danish Government, in the name of our common Christianity, to arrest the further slaughter of those to whom God had united them, not only by the ties of the universal brotherhood of man, but also by close affinity of neighbourhood, and whom they even considered as their own countrymen. We earnestly appealed to them to put an end to this unnatural and deplorable war, and to accept a mode of settlement which shall recognise and establish the just rights of both parties, and heal the breach which the sword had made between them." I had felt so anxious about the result of this interview, and saw how much depended upon it, that I was quite overcome with emotion before I finished, and felt a difficulty in reading over two of the last sentences distinctly; but, perhaps on that very account, it did not produce the less effect upon the minister. Afterwards Elihu Burritt and Frederic Wheeler addressed him. In reply he assured us of the anxious desire of Denmark for peace with Holstein, and appealed to a proposition they had made to constitute a fair tribunal from Holstein, Schleswig, and Denmark, to settle the question amicably. We still urged a reference to impartial arbitrators not natives of either country, making use of all the arguments that occurred to us in favour of it. He by no means put a negative upon our proposition, appeared deeply interested, and I thought somewhat touched and affected by our visit, thanked us for it with apparent cordiality, and before we parted, intimated that we must look rather to the Minister of Foreign Affairs than to him for an answer. We left with him the papers I had read, to show to his colleagues if he thought fit. We afterwards saw Professor David, who evinced a deep and increasing interest in our mission, and intimated when we parted that he would go and see the Prime Minister, and probably the Minister of Foreign Affairs, before the latter saw us in the evening. Punctually at half-past seven o'clock we went to the Hotel of the Foreign Minister, who at once received us, and seated us with himself at a round table. On my proposing to read the same statement which I had to his colleague in the morning, he said

that he had seen it and read it, and it was therefore not necessary. I then said that perhaps he would allow my friends to offer a few observations, on which F. Wheeler made some remarks on the lamentable consequences of a continuance of the war, and the advantages of an amicable termination of it. This was followed up with earnestness by Elihu Burritt at some length; after which De Reedtz, the minister, said that before he went into the question as related to the Government, he wished to say a few words in reference to himself personally. He had, after being in public life for many years, retired with the wish and intention of never entering it again, and he should have preferred, to being in the position he now occupied, following his scientific pursuits; that he had taken his present office solely with the hope of securing peace; that he had three several times been a party to negotiations for the purpose, but that they had failed. But he assured us, in the most earnest and apparently sincere manner, that he was still ready to make any reasonable sacrifices to obtain it. He admitted all the evils we had stated as connected with the war in which brother was engaged against brother, father against son, and the dreadful evils which it engendered in the mutual hatred which increased the longer the war continued, and would be transmitted for ages to come; in fact, that it was likely to be the ruin of both countries, and that the successful party might be the one who had the last dollar to spend. This and other things of the same kind he said with an earnestness of manner that we could not doubt his sincerity. He then, on behalf of the Government, pointed out the different abortive efforts they had made to stop the war; heard all the arguments we wished to urge on him to adopt the course we proposed; said that Denmark, even now, was disposed to concede even a part of her just claims rather than the war should proceed; that he would consult his colleagues the next day on our proposition (which he did not put a negative upon); and if he had anything favourable to communicate, would let us know. We were with him more than an hour, and after leaving him we concluded that we must, if possible, get a

definite answer either for or against our proposition, and the next morning sent him a letter to say (after thanking him for our reception and the assurance of his anxiety for peace) that as, after we left Copenhagen, we should feel it our duty to publish the result of our mission, and wished to do strict justice to all parties, we should be obliged by a reply whether the Danish Government took the responsibility of rejecting our proposition or not. A verbal message came back, saying we should have a reply. At this time Professor David was with us, and we found that he had dined the day before with the ministers, that the Prime Minister and the Secretary of Foreign Affairs had had a long consultation, apparently in reference to our communication; and when we told him of what had occurred at the interview of the night before, and that, as we had now done all we could, we had written for a definite answer, he seemed deeply anxious that this answer should not be in the negative. He then left us to go and see the minister himself. An hour or two after he was gone we received a letter from the latter, appointing nine o'clock the next morning to see us again at his hotel. Finding we had all the afternoon to spare, we accepted an invitation of the American minister (who is become extremely interested in our mission, and most anxious to help us) to go by railway with him to Roshilde, where we were out of the observation of the public at Copenhagen, and spent a few hours most pleasantly in looking at the old cathedral, wandering about the beautiful suburbs, and afterwards taking tea together. We got back between ten and eleven o'clock.

* * * * *

'We are just returned from the Minister of Foreign Affairs. During this interview the minister stated that he could not send us a written reply, as such writing would become a public document. Further, on behalf of himself and his colleagues, he had to say that, although they could not officially accept the proposed mode of settlement, yet they wished it to be distinctly understood that they did by no means reject it, and assured us that if the proposal were forwarded to them in an official and tangible shape, the

Danish Government would take it into its immediate consideration, with every disposition towards its acceptance, and without being tenacious as to the form in which, or the channel through which, it might be forwarded. In reply to a question, he said that it need not have the publicity of being discussed and voted in the Landsversamlung. E. Burritt stays here, and F. Wheeler and I start at two o'clock by steamboat to Lubeck for Hamburg and Kiel. It is desirable that our communication with the Danish Government, at least for the present, should not be made public. As we think the matter of time of great importance, as another battle may take place every day, we still think it our duty to travel to-morrow, and I hope to be in Hamburg before six o'clock in the evening, from whence I intend to post this. We communicate with the Danish minister here in future through Professor David, who, he says, has his confidence. This, we think, will be an important aid towards a successful result.'

Interview with the Duchess of Augustenberg.

'Hamburgh: 9th mo: 18, 1850.

'This morning we had another interview with Professor Worms, but we did not elicit from him that the visit of the two gentlemen from Kiel yesterday had any special reference to our mission; and as our arrival had been announced in the newspapers, and I had given the Duke of Augustenburg reason to expect I would call on my return, if I could make it convenient, F. Wheeler and I rode over there this morning —a distance of four or five miles from our hotel. He was not at home; but while talking to the footmen at the door, a gentleman whom we had seen at Kiel came out, and the duchess herself appeared at the door almost immediately afterwards. This upset our intention of only leaving our cards in case of the duke's absence. We had no sooner entered the door than we were met also by her three daughters; and the whole party, all of whom could speak English, gave us the most cordial welcome, and were evidently and

naturally anxious to know what we could communicate. We were sorry and somewhat embarrassed that we had so little we could tell them, and hardly felt at liberty even to tell them the whole of that, though their open and artless manners were calculated to put us much at ease. The duchess, who could not speak English quite so fluently as her daughters, told us that to-day was the thirtieth anniversary of her marriage, showed us a plate of their palace in the island of Alsen, from which they had now been exiled three years, and which one of her daughters said had been pillaged by the Danes; also a picture of her husband and two sons, who were absent; and lastly, with evident emotion, she unrolled a plan with the whole family group, and several interesting scenes of apparently past family history; expressed an anxious wish that we should again visit them on the return of her husband, who was gone to Kiel or Rendsburg, and asked us whether we would allow the gentleman who met us at the door to call on us at the hotel, evidently with the hope that we could give them some more information on the return of Elihu Burritt, who, we told them, we shortly expected. The daughters spoke English so well that I thought they must have been to our country; but I found they had not, though they had a great desire to go. While we were there a carriage drove up to the door, and a gentleman and lady came in, whom the duchess introduced as the Duke and Duchess of Glucksburg. The former was dressed in military uniform, and could not speak English. We soon afterwards left; but the duchess came out with us to the door, and warmly thanked us for calling. Though these incidents are pleasant and interesting ones connected with our mission, I feel sorely tried at our detention here, but see clearly that we cannot properly leave until after E. B.'s return.'

Second Interview with the Schleswig-Holstein Authorities.

'Kiel: 9th mo: 23, 1850.

'We arrived here about eleven o'clock, and found a gentleman at the station waiting to take us at once to M. Francke,

the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Schleswig-Holstein. On our arrival he received us very cordially, and sat down at a table with us, two other gentlemen being present. I briefly introduced the subject, and then read the written statement which we had given to the Danish Government. I then told him that my friend E. Burritt, whose memory was better than mine, would give him the substance of what had passed verbally. E. Burritt then gave a full and clear outline of the most important part of the interviews, especially those which led us to the firm belief that De Reedtz, the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Denmark, when speaking on behalf of the Government, was sincere in his desire to settle the question amicably, and to meet favourably the proposition to arbitrate, and concluded by stating that, in consequence of our interviews with Professor Worms at Hamburg, F. Wheeler and I had remained there and written back to him to get the principle of arbitration recognised precisely in the same shape that the Duchies had, and his having succeeded in doing so. He was evidently deeply interested in the statement, and at the close of it I read to him our ideas of what the arrangements might be for the appointment, composition, and jurisdiction of the Court of Arbitration. He said that, as their Assembly was about to meet (at twelve o'clock), he could not now give us an answer.

'We at once told him that the subject was of such paramount importance that we would stay over to-morrow. He asked to have our written papers, and made some observations in reference to the constitution of the Court which convinced us that it would be seriously entertained by himself and his colleagues. He invited us to attend the sitting of their Assembly, where we have been for about an hour; and on coming out, the Minister of Foreign Affairs came to me at the door and said he hoped to meet us at our hotel to dinner to-day at four o'clock. It is now between two and three, and as the post goes out at four o'clock, I cannot give any more of our present visit to Kiel. A number, apparently, of fresh recruits for the Holstein army came part of the way

from Altona in the same train with us on their road to Rendsburg. They appeared in a state of excitement, though, I believe, quite sober, and one of them was very near getting under the engine of another train which met us.

'Very affectionately, thy
'J. S.'

Up to this point the intervention of our volunteer ambassadors of peace had proceeded auspiciously. The two Governments had gone so far as to appoint a sort of unofficial negotiator on each side—Professor David, of Copenhagen, on the part of Denmark, and Professor Samwer, of Lubeck, on the part of the Duchies—to confer as to the character and constitution of the proposed Court of Arbitration. At that time Chevalier Bunsen, who was Prussian ambassador in this country, told Mr. Cobden that he had a stronger hope of a satisfactory adjustment of the matter in dispute from that pacific embassy than from all that had been done before by the professional diplomatists of Europe. Unhappily, however, these latter interposed at the critical moment. In a document addressed to the members of the Peace Congress, which Messrs. Sturge, Burritt, and Wheeler published after their return, giving an account of their mission, they say—'We have great confidence that those with whom it now rests will be able to bring the matter to a speedy and successful conclusion. . . . If such an arrangement be *not* now effected we believe that it will be mainly attributable to the interference of the great European Powers, contrary to the wish of one of the contending parties, as indicated in the London Protocol of the 2nd of August—a document which has excited strong dissatisfaction in the minds of the in-

habitants of the Duchies.' How far 'the great European Powers' disposed of the question in a satisfactory manner, the world has ample opportunity of judging by the light of the deplorable events now taking place in the north of Europe.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE RUSSIAN WAR.—VISIT TO ST. PETERSBURG.

The Industrial Exhibition of 1851—Its pacific Tendency—Mr. Sturge's Receptions at Hyde Park—The *Coup d'État* and the Empire in France—The Invasion Panic in England—Efforts of the Peace Party to oppose it—The Eastern Question—Sudden Change of the Public Feeling—Outcry against Russia—Mr. Sturge's sorrowful Apprehension of War—A Visit to the Emperor of Russia is proposed—Minute of the Society of Friends—Mr. Sturge and his Companions start for St. Petersburg—Account of the Journey—Sledge-travelling—A Misadventure on the Road—Arrival at St. Petersburg—Interview with Count Nesselrode—Sights of the City—Appointment to see the Emperor.

THE Industrial Exhibition of 1851, by bringing the nations who had been accustomed to meet only in the fierce conflicts of the battle-field into friendly rivalry with each other in the arts of peace, was felt to be an event eminently favourable to the object which the friends of peace had at heart. The Peace Congress, held that year in London, was therefore singularly appropriate, and seemed to give a fitting expression in living speech to the sentiment of which the Crystal Palace and its contents were the significant material symbol. Mr. Sturge, anxious to avail himself of that propitious season to promote the various philanthropic enterprises in which he was interested, had taken a house at Hyde Park, where he gave a succession of 'receptions,' to which the representatives of different nations were invited. One was devoted to the Peace cause, another to Anti-slavery, a third to Temperance,

and so on with other topics. There, with all the freedom of social converse, good men of different creeds and countries conferred as to the best modes of combating the great evils which afflict the world, and of aiding, by such services as it was in their power to offer, the gracious designs of Providence towards the human race. It cannot be doubted, that from these conferences many a one derived new impulse to spend and be spent in the cause of humanity.

Hitherto the Peace movement had been, on the whole, prosperous and progressive. Attended ever, no doubt, by a sharp comment of criticism from many quarters, which was a good discipline and prevented their enthusiasm from running to seed, its promoters found ample encouragement for their efforts. A deeper sense of the enormity of war was growing up everywhere in the heart of Christian nations. A kindlier feeling was rapidly gaining ground between different countries, especially between England and France. Friendly visits were exchanged by large bodies of the people, who began to discover that those whom they had been taught to regard as 'natural enemies,' were in truth very much men of like affections with themselves. There seemed a prospect, not indeed of a sudden millennium of peace, but of a steady increase of mutual respect and good-will among nations, and of the growth of a public opinion, under the pressure of which Governments might be obliged to seek for some more rational means of settling their differences than by recourse to the sword, and some less ruinous method of preserving peace than by an insane rivalry in armaments, which, far from contributing to that end, only kept their respective countries in a normal condition of disquietude and alarm. One would have

thought that these were results which none would be found to deplore and deprecate. Yet, undoubtedly, there were some who looked upon them with a sinister and angry eye, and were determined to leave no effort untried to counteract them. The Peace men were assailed with extreme vehemence. A constant fire of irritating charges and insinuations was kept up against France. Philosophical reasoning was also put in requisition. The country was solemnly warned that the people were in danger of becoming enervated by the luxury which the long continuance of peace and prosperity had introduced—a danger which did not seem very imminent when we consider that 'the people,' from whom the army was recruited, were for the most part agricultural labourers, whose effeminating luxuries were such as nine or ten shillings a week could purchase. But circumstances came to the help of this class of persons. At the close of 1851, the *coup d'état* took place in France. In November 1852, the empire was reconstituted in the same country. These two events were taken advantage of to work the public mind up into a state of mingled terror and rage bordering on frenzy. Without one single fact on which to build such a conclusion, except that the man who had attained to supreme power in France was a Bonaparte, it was assumed as a settled thing, which none but a simpleton or a traitor could doubt, that there was to be immediate war against England, and that not in the ordinary way to spring out of some misunderstanding between the two Governments—for there was absolutely no question of any kind in dispute—and to be preceded by some show at least of diplomatic negotiation, but in the form of a sudden piratical descent by our neighbours upon our coasts for mere

purposes of pillage and revenge. Tales of the wildest description, tending to show that active preparations were being made on the other side of the Channel for an invasion of this country, were circulated by the newspapers and implicitly believed by thousands. And while these atrocious designs were ascribed to the Emperor, the whole vocabulary of vituperation was emptied on his head day by day. The Peace party, with Mr. Cobden at their head, threw themselves into the breach to stem this torrent of folly, and straightway the wrath of the assailants was directed against them with a violence second only to that wreaked on the French and their ruler. Their exertions, nevertheless, did no doubt greatly contribute to check the panic and to calm the public mind. But such incessant appeals to the passions of the people as were now made by the War party, could not fail ultimately to produce effect. The slumbering spirit of strife was being more and more stirred into life by these loud incantations. The gradual change thus wrought in the temper of the nation was viewed by Mr. Sturge with inexpressible sorrow.

Throughout the storm of obloquy which broke upon the head of the Peace party for opposing the invasion panic, he had been working with more than ordinary energy in the interests of peace. 'I have been overwhelmed,' he says to Mr. Tappan, on Feb. 28, 1853, 'with engagements in trying to stop this war-cry in our country.' And again, to the same friend within a few days of the same date :—

'Thou wilt probably get by the same packet a Manchester paper with a full account of the proceedings of the Peace Congress there last week. I hope and believe that this conference and the pamphlet of Richard Cobden will do some-

thing to check the continued abuse of the French by the London press. That they are producing an effect is evident from the tirade of abuse with which they assail R. Cobden. We have a good deal of confidence in Lord Aberdeen. In 1849 he expressed his opinion in a very decided manner in reference to the great increase of European armaments. Whether he may have the will or the power to act upon it, now that he is Prime Minister, is very uncertain.'

But suddenly there was a change in the direction sought to be given to the hostile feeling of the nation. While the French invasion panic was at its height, the Eastern question, as it was called, began gradually to loom into notice. And forthwith the alarmists quitted the Emperor of the French and turned, with an abruptness that would have been ludicrous if it had not involved such serious consequences, to bait the Emperor of Russia. All the invectives so recently showered on the former were now lavished without stint upon the latter; while he who had been the bugbear of 1853 was all at once, in 1854, taken into high favour as 'our gallant and loyal ally.' There were many things, no doubt, concurring to produce the fierce excitement against Russia that soon culminated into a tempest of passion which defied all the restraint of reason and justice. There were very exaggerated notions abroad as to the growing power of that empire; coloured maps were published showing the additions made to her territories within the last hundred years—a matter of complaint which came with a singularly ill-grace from a nation which, during the same period, had probably added four times more territory to her own dominions. Strange as it may seem, there was combined with this a most contemptuous opinion of her capacities and resources as a military power A

generous, if not very intelligent, sympathy with Poland as an oppressed nationality had also aided to swell the tide of indignation against Russia, while the part she had so recently taken in the suppression of Hungarian independence had been pressed upon the public mind with extraordinary vividness and power by the eloquent diatribes of Kossuth. Added to this was a complete ignorance as to the real state of Turkey, and especially the oppressed and miserable condition of its Christian population. But, perhaps, what more than all tended to raise the war-feeling to so ungovernable a pitch was the unexampled prosperity which had flowed in upon the nation as the result of free trade. 'Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked.'

But be the causes what they may, appearances grew so menacing, even towards the middle of 1853, as seriously to alarm those interested in the preservation of peace. Thus we find Mr. Sturge writing to Mr. Tappan, July 8, 1853:—

'We are here in much uneasiness as to whether this Russo-Turkish affair may not lead to a European war. What strangely inconsistent beings professing Christians are! A few months ago Louis Napoleon was held up as a monster in human shape, and we were put to great expense to prepare against the pretended danger, that he and his people would turn pirates, and suddenly come over to murder and rob us. Now we are uniting our fleet with that of this very monster to fight with the Turks against a professedly Christian country, whose Emperor tells us that he has no object of conquest in view, but solely the protection of his fellow-Christians from the persecutions of those Turks whom English and French Christians are so ready to fight for.'

A few months later, Jan. 13, 1854, he writes again:—

'We are feeling very anxious about the question, or rather we must now say the war, between Russia and Turkey. There

is but too great reason to fear that it may end in a European war; and I am sorry to say that what is called the Liberal party in this country seem the most anxious to promote it. There are even Dissenting ministers who are trying to push on our Government to hostilities, and are blaming Lord Aberdeen for his endeavours to preserve peace.'

The feeling of anxiety of which he speaks in this letter grew very oppressive to Mr. Sturge's mind as events became more and more threatening. Writing at the beginning of 1854 to Rev. John Clark, he says:—

'I am glad to hear that your Educational Bill is dropped, and that there is a more cheerful spirit in the community. I trust that brighter days are before you. But, alas! if I am to judge by what is passing here, we are little qualified to bear either national or individual prosperity. No sooner does Providence smile upon us in this way than we rush headlong into what, I fear, will prove one of the most bloody, as it is one of the most uncalled-for wars in which England has ever engaged. Whatever may have been the conduct of Russia towards Turkey, our aggressions in India and China have far exceeded it in enormity; and it appears to me as though the conduct of our rulers in getting us into this war is intended by Providence as a judgment for our national crimes, especially in those countries. But such are the mysterious dispensations of Providence, that those who are most guilty in promoting war are seldom those who suffer most by it. Such is the gloomy aspect of things here that I feel greatly discouraged, and fear all that is good will be thrown back half a century.'

But Mr. Sturge was not a man to rest satisfied with lamentations. The impulse of his nature was ever to ask—Can anything be done? The Peace party had done all that it was possible for them to do at home. Facing the unpopularity and odium which assailed

those who dared to withstand the delusion of the hour, they had steadfastly pleaded, both in and out of parliament, in favour of moderation and peace. But, in December 1853, while Mr. Sturge was in earnest conversation with his friend Mr. Joseph Cooper, in London, who had been long and intimately associated with him in many of his philanthropic labours, the idea was started whether some good might not be effected by a deputation from the Society of Friends waiting upon the Emperor of Russia. It was obvious enough, from the actual temper of the nation, that there was no hope of conciliatory counsels from our side. But was it not possible that the single mind which controlled the destinies of Russia might prove more accessible to influence than the millions of minds at that moment inflamed by prejudice and passion which ruled the policy of England? And might not a respectful and earnest appeal on grounds of humanity and religion from a body of Christian men known to bear no political character, and addressed to the heart of the man rather than to the pride of the monarch, accomplish something of what the angry remonstrances of diplomacy, backed by menacing demonstrations of force, had failed to effect? Such were the questions which Mr. Sturge and his associates asked. After private consultation with a few more Friends, the matter was submitted to what is called the Meeting for Sufferings —a sort of standing committee which represents the Society of Friends during the intervals of its yearly meetings.* This body, after very serious and prayerful deliberation, adopted the suggestion, and it was in their

* In the early history of the Society, when persecution was the heritage of every Quaker, 'the Meeting for Sufferings' arose out of the exigencies of the times; its objects being to relieve Friends who were

name and as their representatives that the three gentlemen constituting the deputation, Mr. Sturge, Mr. Henry Pease, and Mr. Robert Charleton, went on the mission to Russia. It is often said that they were sent by the Peace Society. But the Peace Society had nothing to do with the appointment except cordially to wish God speed to the good and brave men that had undertaken it. It was strictly a religious mission, springing from a religious body, and proceeding altogether upon religious grounds, as will appear from the following minute adopted by the meeting to which we have already referred :—

'*At a Meeting, representing the Religious Society of Friends, held in London, the* 17*th of* 1*st month,* 1854.

'This meeting has been introduced into much religious concern in contemplating the apparent probability of war between some of the nations of Europe. Deeply impressed with the enormous amount of evil that invariably attends the prosecution of war, and with the utter inconsistency of all war with the spirit of Christianity and the precepts of its divine Founder as set forth in the New Testament, this meeting has concluded, under a strong feeling of religious duty, to present an address to Nicholas, Emperor of Russia, on this momentous question; and it also concludes to appoint Joseph Sturge, Robert Charleton, and Henry Pease, to be the bearers of this address, and, if the opportunity for so doing be afforded, to present the same in person.

'In committing this service to our dear brethren, we crave for them, in the prosecution of it, the help and guidance of that wisdom which is from above; and we commend them,

prisoners, to make representations to the King, the Government, or Parliament, and generally to help and succour the victims of persecution. Hence its name, and though the duties of this 'meeting' have changed, it is a proof of how real a thing that name implied that it should have been thus perpetuated to this day.

as well as the cause entrusted to them, to the blessing of Almighty God.

'Signed in and on behalf of the meeting by

'Samuel Fox,

'Clerk at this time.'

We shall permit Mr. Sturge to tell the story of that journey in his own simple words, as they were written from day to day in familiar letters to his family, supplementing what, in one or two places, seems defective by communications with which we have been kindly favoured by one of his colleagues in the mission, Mr. Robert Charleton.

The deputation started from London on January 20, 1854, and, passing through Berlin, Konigsberg, and Riga, reached St. Petersburg on February 2.

'Petersburg: 2nd mo: 2, 1854.

'Although, as thou mayst suppose, somewhat wearied with our journey, I wish just to commence a letter to say we arrived here about seven o'clock this evening, and are located at Miss Benson's, on the English quay, as comfortably as we could have been at almost any hotel in England. We are all in good health, and have got on far better than, from the state of the roads, we could have anticipated, and have met with as much civility and attention as if we had been subjects of the Emperor of Russia himself. As we had mostly to employ six, and on one occasion seven horses, from the heavy drifts of the snow in some parts of the road, we calculate we have had the help of upwards of 200 Russian horses to bring us here, at the low charge of about three halfpence per mile for each horse, and have reason to be very thankful so far that we have not met with any mishap worth notice. We have come with our carriage on a sledge all the way from Riga, and the latter has proved so strong, and the former so firmly secured to it, as to stand, without any material injury, all the shocks of our journey.'

'Petersburg: 2nd mo: 4, 1854.

'I wrote by last post, briefly mentioning our arrival here, &c. We were detained in Riga nearly four hours longer than we intended, in consequence of the breaking of a part of our travelling apparatus in fixing the carriage to the sledge (and which in England would probably have been put right in half an hour), so that we did not leave Riga until after two o'clock in the afternoon. We went to the Government office in that city by appointment at ten o'clock, where our passports were exchanged for another document, which amongst other things described our persons, and also contained instructions, in English, of how we were to proceed on our arrival in Petersburg. The number of conveyances in Riga, principally sledges, many of them elegantly fitted up, far exceeds anything I had seen in any city of the size before. In the street opposite our hotel, it was often as crowded as Cheapside, and as each owner of a sledge is obliged to have one or more bells on his horse or horses, there was a continual jingle not only in the day but through the night. It seems singular that in this cold climate almost all the middle classes *ride* even short distances, and the ladies in an open drosky, with apparently as little covering as they use in walking in England, while the gentlemen not only ride but walk in their fur coats. After we had proceeded two stages with four horses, during which the snow continued to fall, we had to take six horses; and towards eleven o'clock it fell so heavily that even our courier began to think it might be safest to stop at the next posting station for fear of being blocked up in the road. However, towards midnight it abated, and with an extra horse one stage we got on through the night, and the following day with six horses, we travelled at the rate of from six to eight miles an hour, losing from fifteen to forty minutes at the different stations, which are at the average distance of about twenty Russian versts, or about fourteen miles. We were agreeably surprised to find these stations, instead of being worse, much better than before we arrived at Riga. They are handsomely built, and well furnished, and it is part of the regulations that the occupiers should keep them well

heated with stoves during the winter. The house, firewood, and furniture are provided by Government, and a part of the latter seems uniformly to be one or more pictures of the Emperor. The rooms for visitors seem generally well cleaned, but we soon had proof that it was not always the case with parts more out of sight. We arrived at Dorpat, where there is a University of about 600 students, about seven o'clock the second evening, and, thinking it would divide the distance better to Petersburg, we proceeded to the next posting-station, and found the sleeping accommodation really cleaner and better than at the hotel at Riga. We started between six and seven in the morning, and during a good part of the day passed along the north shore of the Lake Piepus, which was often in sight, but was for the most part enveloped in mist; in one place, however, we could see, I should suppose, not less than a hundred sledges passing along it, as being in some cases nearer as well as smoother than the road. The number of small sledges with one horse is great in this part of Russia. Sledges being the principal, and in the winter the only, means of transit for all kinds of produce and merchandise, we met or passed them at almost all hours of the night as well as day. Generally a considerable number of them go together, and there are large sheds on the road, not far from the posting-stations, in which the men and their horses can get under cover. While on the banks of the Piepus we had not unfrequently to pass through some rather deep drifts of fresh-fallen snow (more so, probably, from the sledges with produce and merchandise taking to the ice), and I was surprised to see how well six little horses, with our heavy sledge behind them, would pull through it, and come in comparatively fresh at the end of the stage, when English horses would probably have been knocked up with even a light weight behind them. We proceeded steadily, with an occasional great shake, until about one o'clock the next night, when, at a time when we were all nearly or quite asleep, our sledge suddenly descended, and, after appearing to be about to tip the carriage over, came to a dead stop and quickly roused us. Our driver was vainly urging on his

horses, and we escaped out of the door on the upper side as fast as we could. The vehicle had got into such a position that our efforts added to those of our six horses failed to move it. The driver at last thought of trying to put the horses to drag it into the common, away from the road, and in this he succeeded; and after taking a sweep through the snow he brought it back to the road again, without any damage except, I believe, a little straining of one of the springs of the carriage. A few hours after this, and when it had become daylight, we found our conveyance once more come to a stand still, and on getting out it proved to be occasioned by some of those undulations from the drifts of snow, which are described by William Allen and Stephen Grellet as producing the same effect on them as sea-sickness when their sledges passed over them. But in this case they were not sufficiently frozen to bear our heavy sledge. However, on our getting out, the horses dragged it along, and we proceeded without any serious interruption, the road improving and the snow becoming more beaten as we approached Petersburg. Our plan with meals has been to take our breakfast and tea at the posting-houses, where they find us good water and good milk, and use our own tea, coffee, cocoa, and biscuits or bread (some very good of the latter we bought at Riga and Konigsberg). We take our dinner in the carriage, of bread, biscuits, raisins, and an apple, to which we added in Riga a tongue, a bit of beef, a little butter, and a little jar of preserves, which lasted us to Petersburg.

'11 o'clock P.M.—We are just returned from a visit to W. C. Gillibrand, who gave us some private details of deep interest of the Royal Family of Russia, which, coming from an intelligent Christian Englishman who has resided here forty years with unusual means of information, may I think be relied upon, and which places the character of the present Emperor in a more favourable light than we have been wont to view it in England; but I must defer writing more at present, further than saying that we have prepared a note to Count Nesselrode, and W. C. Gillibrand has engaged to send it to him at ten o'clock to-morrow morning.'

Petersburg: 2nd mo: 8, 1854.

'We took two sledges the afternoon before yesterday, and went on the ice on the Gulf of Finland about half way towards Cronstadt, to what is called the half-way house, which is temporarily erected at a great distance from shore for the accommodation of passengers, and where they say there are sometimes not less than 200 sledges at one time, many of them heavily laden, yet without at all making the ice crack. It was quite dark before we got back, but there are long lines of posts, and watchmen at certain distances who ring bells to keep travellers in a right direction in case of a snow-storm or fog. Before this precaution was taken it was not uncommon for people to get lost, and there have been cases when persons not properly clothed have been frozen to death. Indeed, we have seen a gentleman who says he has sometimes been travelling on the ice below Cronstadt when a snow-storm came on, and he has remained out all night in his sledge.'

As one of Mr. Sturge's letters is missing—that containing an account of the interview of the deputation with Count Nesselrode—we are happy to be able to supply the omission by an extract from one of Mr. Charleton's letters:—

'2nd mo: 2.—Count Nesselrode had appointed to meet us at one, but sent us word that, in consequence of having business with the Emperor, he wished our interview postponed until half-past one. That he should thus send purposely to avoid keeping us waiting half an hour, we thought a rather striking mark of politeness. At the appointed hour we went, and having been shown through a long suite of rooms we were ushered into the count's private apartment, where he received us with great courtesy and affability. Joseph Sturge read the address to him, and some remarks were added. Count Nesselrode expressed his entire concurrence in the sentiments it contained, and his appreciation of the motives by which it was dictated. He said that

the Emperor, who had been apprised of our arrival, would be quite willing to allow us to present the address in a private interview, and that we should be informed as soon as a suitable time could be fixed. He referred to the intercourse of the late Emperor Alexander with our friends William Allen and Thomas Shillito, and himself added a reference to Daniel Wheeler. We have no reason to doubt the entire sincerity of the count's expression of satisfaction with our visit, as we are informed on good authority that he is personally very much opposed to war.'

We now resume our quotations from Mr. Sturge's letters:—

'Count Nesselrode has requested his private secretary to accompany us to see the most remarkable sights in the city, but I confess that my mind is too ill at ease with the prospect of the visit to the Emperor before us on which so much may depend, and at which it may be so important not to say too little or too much, to enjoy the most interesting sights, even if I had not very much outlived my curiosity in respect to such matters. But as Count Nesselrode, who is Chancellor of the Empire, the highest office of the state, had specially appointed this gentleman to show us anything we might like to see, it would have been discourteous to refuse. We have been to-day to what is called "The Hermitage," which is attached to the Winter Palace, where the Emperor and his family now reside, though it does not actually form part of it. We have spent about three hours there, and as Henry Pease observed when we left, if we could describe the beauty and magnificence of the place, which it would be scarcely possible to do, our friends would consider it an exaggeration. Of course we could only take a cursory view, though we probably walked a mile or more through galleries and rooms fitted up in the most costly, and at the same time the most chaste style. Some are devoted to medals and coins chiefly of gold or silver, and arranged according to to the different countries to which they belong; others to statues ancient and modern; but the greater

proportion to pictures, different rooms being set apart for the artists of different nations. But what perhaps strikes most is the costly character of the furniture of the different suites of rooms, the richness and highly polished finish of the multitude of Italian marble pillars, generally of one single block, the beauty of the ceilings, &c. We are becoming rather unpleasantly objects of curiosity, and as it will get out that the Chancellor of the Empire has received us cordially and the Emperor has determined to receive the address, we shall become more so, and we shall be anxious to get out of the way as soon as we possibly can. We already find it difficult to refuse invitations without appearing uncourteous, though we have delivered scarcely any of our letters of introduction. We have consented to dine with A. Mirrielies, a friend of W. C. Gillibrand, to-morrow evening, and we are intending to go to see a school in which he is much interested to-morrow morning. I find the English gentlemen, and especially the ladies, have admitted pretty strongly anti-Russian feelings, and except where there is a very strong interest in favour of peace, I fear they would not be sorry to see England at war with this country; and if they say as much to the Russians as they do amongst themselves, it is not surprising that there should be, as they allege there is, an increasing anti-English feeling amongst the Russians. All parties, however, admit that the Emperor has qualities of private character which we in England do not give him credit for; that he is not only kind but affectionate in the private and domestic relations of life, and it is said on pretty good authority that he devotes nearly an hour daily to his private devotions.

'2nd mo: 9.—We have been to-day to see a school for the instruction of foreign residents in Petersburg, at which there are usually about 180 girls and 120 boys in attendance. We were much pleased with the order and cleanliness of the school, and, as far as we were able to judge, the progress of the children; but as they speak either German or Russian, I could judge of little more than the writing. It is under the care of Gillibrand and his friends, and is mainly supported by

voluntary subscriptions, to which the Emperor and his family contribute liberally. About 6,000 children have been educated there since its establishment. All born of Russian parents are brought up in connection with the Greek Church. We have been taken by the gentleman appointed by Count Nesselrode to attend upon us to see what is called the Mining Corps, which contains many curious and valuable specimens of the Mines of Siberia, models of the way in which the mines are worked, &c. He tells us we shall be informed to-night if the Emperor will see us to-morrow or not.

'11 o'clock at night.—We have received a letter from Count Nesselrode, saying the Emperor had fixed half-past one to-morrow to see us, and asking us to be at his office at one. Of course, from this until the interview is over will be an anxious time for us all.'

CHAPTER XXIII.

INTERVIEW WITH THE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA.

Motives that prompted the Mission—The Address from the Society of Friends—Mr Charleton's Account of the Interview—The Emperor's Emotion—Interview with the Empress—The Emperor's Reply—His Request to the Deputation to postpone their Departure—Interview with the Grand Duchess of Leuchtenberg—Altered Aspect of Affairs—Arrival of the English Mail—Violent Speeches in Parliament—Effect of the Friends' Mission in England—Continued Kindness to the Deputation at St. Petersburg—Results of the Mission—Mistaken Notion of its Influence on the War—Unfounded Accusation against the Peace Party of having Occasioned the War—Its real Causes.

It is, of course, open to those who delight in referring all acts of high devotion to mean and ignoble motives, to say or insinuate that these three gentlemen, in quitting their families and undertaking, at such a season, a long and hazardous journey into those regions 'where winter barricades the realms of frost,' were actuated only by a love of notoriety, or a puerile passion for getting into contact with a crowned head. One thing is very certain, that no one who knew Joseph Sturge will accept that interpretation of the matter. The writer of this memoir saw him on the eve of his journey, and if ever man acted under a solemn, a religious sense of responsibility, he did so on that occasion. His heart had been long burdened, as his letters abundantly testify, with apprehension of the incalculable evils, moral and material, that must flow to Europe from such a war as was then impending,

and he was ready, as he says to one of his correspondents, 'to brave all ridicule in going, were it only on a forlorn hope, on the side of peace.' We may be very sure that it was not without 'strong crying and tears,' to Him 'who holdeth in His hand the king's heart as the rivers of water which He turneth whithersoever He will,' that this enterprise was begun and continued.

The following was the address which the deputation were commissioned to present to the Emperor:—

ADDRESS FROM THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS TO THE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA.

To NICHOLAS, EMPEROR OF ALL THE RUSSIAS.

'May it please the Emperor,

'We, the undersigned, Members of a Meeting representing the religious Society of Friends (commonly called Quakers) in Great Britain, venture to approach the Imperial presence, under a deep conviction of religious duty, and in the constraining love of Christ our Saviour.

'We are, moreover, encouraged so to do by the many proofs of condescension and Christian kindness manifested by thy late illustrious brother, the Emperor Alexander, as well as by thy honoured mother, to some of our brethren in religious profession.

'It is well known that, apart from all political consideration, we have, as a Christian Church, uniformly upheld a testimony against war, on the simple ground that it is utterly condemned by the precepts of Christianity, as well as altogether incompatible with the Spirit of its Divine Founder, who is emphatically styled the "Prince of Peace." This conviction we have repeatedly pressed upon our own rulers, and often, in the language of bold but respectful remonstrance, have we urged upon them the maintenance of peace, as the true policy, as well as manifest duty, of a Christian Government.

'And now, O great Prince, permit us to express the sorrow which fills our hearts, as Christians and as men, in contemplating the probability of war in any portion of the continent of Europe. Deeply to be deplored would it

be were that peace which to a very large extent has happily prevailed so many years exchanged for the unspeakable horrors of war, with all its attendant moral evil and physical suffering.

'It is not our business, nor do we presume to offer any opinion upon the question now at issue between the Imperial Government of Russia and that of any other country; but estimating the exalted position in which Divine Providence has placed thee, and the solemn responsibilities devolving upon thee, not only as an earthly potentate, but also as a believer in that Gospel which proclaims "peace on earth" and "good-will toward men," we implore Him by whom "kings reign and princes decree justice" so to influence thy heart and to direct thy councils at this momentous crisis, that thou mayst practically exhibit to the nations, and even to those who do not profess the "like precious faith," the efficacy of the Gospel of Christ, and the universal application of His command, "Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."

'The more fully the Christian is persuaded of the justice of his own cause, the greater his magnanimity in the exercise of forbearance. May the Lord make thee the honoured instrument of exemplifying this true nobility; thereby securing to thyself and to thy vast dominions that true glory and those rich blessings which could never result from the most successful appeal to arms.

'Thus, O mighty Prince, may the miseries and devastation of war be averted; and in that solemn day when "every one of us shall give account of himself to God," may the benediction of the Redeemer apply to thee, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God," and mayest thou be permitted through a Saviour's love to exchange an earthly for an heavenly crown—"a crown of glory which fadeth not away."'

We are happy to be able to present to our readers

the following account of the interview with the Emperor, which is much fuller than any yet published, from the pen of Mr. Robert Charleton :—

'At the appointed hour we repaired to the palace, and were received by the Emperor at a private interview, no one else being present excepting Baron Nicolay, who acted as interpreter, the Emperor speaking in French. After the address had been read by Joseph Sturge, and presented to the Emperor, the latter asked us to be seated on a sofa, while he took a chair, and entered into free conversation, kindly giving us a full opportunity for making any verbal statement that we might wish to offer. Joseph Sturge then proceeded to give expression to what had rested on his mind, not entering into the political matters involved in the dispute, but confining himself to the moral and religious aspects of the question. In the course of his observations he contrasted the Mohammedan religion (professed by the Turks), which avowedly justifies the employment of the sword, with the religion of Him whose reign was to be emphatically one of *peace*. He also remarked that among the multitude who would be the victims, in the event of a European war, the greatest sufferers would probably be, not those who had caused the war, but innocent men, with their wives and children. On our thanking the Emperor for the kind reception he had given us, J. Sturge said, with much feeling, that although we should probably never see him again on this side of eternity, we wished him to know that there were those in England who desired his temporal and spiritual welfare as sincerely as his own subjects—when the Emperor shook hands with each of us very cordially, and, with eyes moistened with emotion, turned hastily away (apparently to conceal his feelings), saying, "My wife also wishes to see you." We were accordingly ushered into the Empress's apartment, where we spent a short time in conversation with her and her daughter, the Grand Duchess Olga, both of whom spoke English pretty well. The Empress said to us, "I have just seen the Emperor; the tears were in his eyes."

'I may here notice the deep impression evidently made by J. Sturge personally, both on Count Nesselrode and afterwards on the Emperor. His frank and open manner, his obvious sincerity and transparency of character, and the great simplicity and *depth of feeling* with which he advocated the cause of peace, must have contrasted strongly with that guarded reserve and that studied obsequiousness of manner which usually mark such intercourse with despotic power. The simple and often hesitating manner in which he expressed himself rather added to the weight of what he said, showing, as it did, that his reliance was on the power of the truths which he advocated, and not at all on his own manner of enforcing them.'

The following is the substance of what the Emperor said in reply to the address. It was taken down immediately afterwards, and submitted to the revision of Baron Nicolay, who testified to its accuracy.

'I wish to offer some explanation of the circumstances which led to the present unhappy dispute. We received the blessings of Christianity from the Greek Empire, and this has established, and maintained ever since, a link of connection, both moral and religious, between Russia and that Power. The ties that have thus united the two countries have subsisted for 900 years, and were not severed by the conquest of Russia by the Tartars; and when, at a later period, our country succeeded in shaking off that yoke, and the Greek Empire, in its turn, fell under the sway of the Turks, we still continued to take a lively interest in the welfare of our coreligionists there: and when Russia became powerful enough to resist the Turks, and to dictate the terms of peace, we paid particular attention to the well-being of the Greek Church, and procured the insertion, in successive treaties, of most important articles in her favour. I have myself acted as my predecessors had done, and the Treaty of Adrianople, in 1829, was as explicit as the former ones in this respect. Turkey, on her part, recognised this right of religious interference, and fulfilled her engagements until

within the last year or two, when, for the first time, she gave me reason to complain. I will not now advert to the parties who were her principal instigators on that occasion; suffice it to say that it became my duty to interfere, and to claim from Turkey the fulfilment of her engagements. My representations were pressing but friendly, and I have every reason to believe that matters would soon have been settled if Turkey had not been induced by other parties to believe that I had ulterior objects in view; that I was aiming at conquest, aggrandisement, and the ruin of Turkey. I have solemnly disclaimed, and do now as solemnly disclaim, every such motive. I do not desire war; I abhor it as sincerely as you do, and am ready to forget the past, if only the opportunity be afforded me.

'I have great esteem for your country, and a sincere affection for your Queen, whom I admire not only as a Sovereign, but as a lady, a wife, and a mother. I have placed full confidence in her, and have acted towards her in a frank and friendly spirit. I felt it my duty to call her attention to future dangers, which I considered as likely, sooner or latter, to arise in the East, in consequence of the existing state of things. What on my part was prudent foresight has been unfairly construed in your country into a designing policy, and an ambitious desire of conquest. This has deeply wounded my feelings and afflicted my heart. Personal insults and invectives I regard with indifference. It is beneath my dignity to notice them. And I am ready to forgive all that is personal to me, and to hold out my hand to my enemies in the true Christian spirit. I cannot understand what cause of complaint your nation has against Russia. I am anxious to avoid war by all possible means—I will not attack, and shall only act in self-defence; but I cannot be indifferent to what concerns the honour of my country. I have a duty to perform as a Sovereign. As a Christian I am ready to comply with the precepts of religion. On the present occasion, my great duty is to attend to the interests and honour of my country.'

Those who prefer to do so are, of course, at liberty to look upon all this as a farce, to regard the Emperor's professions as deliberate falsehoods, his courtesy to the deputation as mere policy, and his emotion and tears as simulated to impose upon these simple Quakers. They, at least, had a firm conviction of his sincerity. Nay, more, they had a strong belief that it was his intention to make some further communication, if not to make them the bearers of some proposals to our own Government in the interests of peace. Their reason for that belief was this. The interview took place on Thursday the 10th. Having fulfilled the duty for which they had come, the deputation were anxious to return with as little delay as possible, and had determined to start early on the following Monday. On Saturday Baron Nicolay had called upon them twice, and on the second occasion, as Mr. Sturge says in one of his letters, 'brought the final copy of the statement which the Emperor had made, and which there is no doubt had undergone his revision.' On Sunday, after having worship in their own room, Mr. Sturge and Mr. Pease had gone to take their leave of their excellent friend Mr. Gillibrand, whose kindness had been unceasing to them from the beginning. On their return they found that Baron Nicolay had been at their lodgings again, with a message from the Emperor begging them to delay their departure for a day. We extract the account of this matter from one of Mr. Sturge's letters:—

'In the morning (that is, of Sunday) we held our little meeting together, and after receiving sundry calls, including one from Baron Stiglietz, the court banker, H. Pease and I went to make what we thought would be a parting call on our excellent friends the Gillibrands, but on our return we

found Baron Nicolay again with Robert Charleton. The Baron told us that the Emperor had concluded to send a reply, addressed especially to the Friends who had deputed us to bring the address, which would be signed on his behalf by the Chancellor of the Empire, and as this would be the official document, the other would be for private use only. That the Duchess of Leuchtenberg, the widowed daughter of the Emperor, who has been lately in England, and who with her young children lives in a palace by herself, wished to see us at half-past twelve o'clock on third day (Tuesday) and that to make up for this loss of our time, Count Nesselrode would send a courier before us to facilitate our change of horses, &c. That at this interview, he intimated, we should probably see other members of the royal family, including the Heir Apparent and the Grand Duke Constantine. We of course agreed to this arrangement, and shall hardly get off before six o'clock to-morrow night.'

The interview with the Duchess of Leuchtenberg took place. But by that time the whole aspect of things had undergone a change.

'We called,' says Mr. Charleton, 'at the palace of the Grand Duchess as proposed. But here our reception was very different from what it had been a few days before at the Imperial Palace. Instead of the earnest and cordial manner of the Emperor and Empress, the Grand Duchess received us with merely formal politeness. Her sorrowful air, and the depressed look of the gentleman in waiting, made it evident to us that a great change had come over the whole aspect of affairs. Nor were we at a loss to acount for this change. *The mail from England had arrived*, with newspapers giving an account of the opening of parliament and of the intensely warlike speeches in the House of Commons.'

Very singular was the effect produced in this country by the intelligence of the Friends' mission to Russia. The 'Times' was at first surprised into something like generous admiration of the act.

'It would certainly,' it said, 'be unfitting in us, and nothing could be further from us, than to cast anything like ridicule upon the conscientious efforts of patriotic men, who are honestly endeavouring to work out their theory in practice, although we may be profoundly convinced that their opinions are but little in unison with the age in which they live, and the stern realities of the actual position of affairs. . . . . Still we must not deny to the gentlemen engaged in this piece of enthusiastic folly the praise of sincerity. It appears that, in the midst of the most inclement season of the year, they have quitted their own homes, and undertaken a difficult, not to say hazardous journey, with the sole object of testing the value of their theories.'

In a few days, however, it repented its generosity, and published one of the bitterest and coarsest articles that ever appeared, even in its pages. This was taken as the key-note for popular opinion, and the deputation were followed to Russia with a storm of mingled indignation and scorn which could hardly have been surpassed if, instead of being messengers of peace on earth and good-will among men, they had been apostles of treason and blasphemy. When the papers therefore reached St. Petersburgh, they could not fail to produce, as they were intended to produce, unfavourable effects as respects the objects of the journey. All this, however, might have been overlooked. But when it was found that leading ministers of the Crown had allowed themselves to indulge in violent diatribes against the Emperor and his Government, with whom they were still professedly at peace, the feeling of resentment was naturally intense, and all hope of accommodation was from that moment surrendered.

But the respect shown to the deputation personally remained unabated. 'Very great kindness,' says Mr. Charleton, 'has been shown to us by the English

residents in St. Petersburgh, and indeed by all classes. On the day before our departure we had a very friendly call from an old Russian Admiral, who is much respected; and on the afternoon of our leaving, we had also a long call from Baron Nicolay, an attaché of Count Nesselrode, from whom we have experienced much persevering kindness.'

The Emperor also sent a Government courier to accompany them on their return, with orders that everything should be done to contribute to the rapidity and comfort of their journey.*

No doubt, so far as any influence in preventing the war was concerned, the mission of the three Friends to Petersburgh was unsuccessful. But that it was in vain we do not believe. It proved to the world what indeed at that moment sorely needed proof, that all Christian feeling was not extinct in England. It presented a fine example of moral heroism, for it required

* That the Emperor was at the moment deeply touched by the simple and earnest words of Joseph Sturge, delivered as they were in a voice tremulous with deep emotion, does not admit of a doubt. But Mr. Kinglake insinuates in his last volumes, and promises to prove in his next, that this feeling became afterwards changed into a frenzy of anger against the Friends for having deceived him. We must, however, say cordially that we shall look for some better *proof* of this allegation than what is afforded by imaginary conversations which, however dramatically effective, have about as much historic value as those of Lucian or Landor. Nor shall we be satisfied with vague oracular references to rumours that have somehow floated in solemn secrecy to the ear of the author alone. This mystery of allusion may be a merit in a poet, as mystery we are told is one element of the sublime, but hardly so in a historian, whose business it is to establish truth, not to excite the imagination. It is, at least, very certain that after the death of the Emperor, the Empress Dowager, who worshipped the memory of her husband, on more than one occasion, in interviews with members of the Society of Friends, referred to the mission of Mr. Sturge and his companions in a very different tone from what we should have expected had she been aware that the remembrance of it had driven the Emperor to the transport of wrath described by Mr. Kinglake.

a far higher order of courage to do what they did, in the state of public opinion which then prevailed in this country, than that which suffices to push men into the imminent deadly breach. Dr. Macgowan, the distinguished medical missionary to China, states, that while travelling in the interior of that country, he found that the story of the journey to Petersburgh had somehow floated into that remote region, and had strangely impressed the not very susceptible people of China as a practical illustration of the real life and power of Christianity.

But there are persons who gravely maintain that the Quaker mission not only failed to prevent, but was actually the cause of the Russian war. This charge is so supremely absurd that it might scarcely seem to merit refutation. Yet it has been remarked by no ordinary observer of human life,

> 'A foolish thing that's said but oft enough
> Shall pass at last for absolutely wise,
> And not with fools exclusively.' *

It is strange, surely, that anyone, however strongly prejudiced, should find the cause of the war, not in the rival intrigues and angry altercations of diplomatists; not in the frantic outcry against France and its ruler which had resounded through England for two preceding years, and which must have persuaded the Emperor of Russia, if indeed he nourished the ambitious projects ascribed to him, that it was next to impossible the two nations could then combine against him; not in the loud voice of insult and challenge hurled from a thousand throats against the great northern potentate himself, stinging into fierce resentment and obstinacy the proudest and most powerful man in Christendom; not

* Mrs. Browning.

in the moving of fleets and the mustering of armies, which brought men inflamed by passion into perilous proximity to each other—not to any or all of these things combined, but to the presentation of a religious address by three Christian gentlemen to the Emperor of Russia, reminding him that 'war is utterly condemned by the precepts of Christianity and is altogether incompatible with the spirit of its Divine Founder, who is emphatically styled the Prince of Peace.' The people who say this of course pay no heed to events or dates. They forget that *before* the mission to Petersburgh the Russian army had crossed the Pruth; that the allied squadrons of England and France were already anchored in the Bosphorus; that the Turkish Divan had declared war against Russia and commenced hostilities on the Danube; that the Government of the Porte had peremptorily told our ambassador at Constantinople that they were determined to reject every kind of note proposing a peaceful adjustment of the difficulty, however carefully expressed; that the Turks had seized the Russian fort of St. Nicholas on the eastern coast of the Euxine, and that Russia, in retaliation, had destroyed the Turkish fleet at Sinope.

It is impossible not to feel that there is a most significant confession of inward misgiving in the elaborate attempts that are made to father the responsibility of the Russian war upon anybody and everybody but those who were its avowed and active promoters. If, as we were loudly and universally told at the time, and as we are sometimes told still, though with a far more bated breath—if the war was a just, necessary, and glorious war, a war for the defence of the right against insolent and tyrannous wrong, a war of freedom against despotism, of civilisation against barbarism; if, above all, it was a

war that was inevitable to prevent all Western Europe from being swamped by another irruption of the Goths, a war that must have come sooner or later, and could not have come at a better time—why should those who were its ardent advocates be so eager to shift the burden of their glory upon other men's shoulders? Might we not rather have expected a jealous rivalry of claims to the honour of having helped to pass so blessed a consummation? Instead of which those who were the most conspicuous favourers and eulogists of the war now vehemently exclaim, 'We had nothing to do with it. It was the Emperor of the French that did it. It was Lord Aberdeen that did it. It was the peace party in England that did it. It was the Quaker deputation to St. Petersburgh that did it.' Is there not in all this an implicit acknowledgment that the war was a bad and indefensible business of which everybody is beginning to feel ashamed? And therefore, according to a fashion not uncommon in this world, those who did their utmost to produce it, now lay the guilt of it at the door of those who did their utmost to prevent it.*

* 'There do in every age occur disorders and mishaps, springing from various complications of causes, working some of them in a more open and discernible, others in a more secret and subtle way (especially from Divine judgment and Providence checking or chastising sin): from such occurrences it is common to snatch occasion and matter for calumny. Those who are disposed this way are ready peremptorily to charge them upon whomsoever they dislike or dissent from, although without any apparent cause, or upon most frivolous and senseless pretences; yea, often when reason showeth the quite contrary, and they who are so charged are in just esteem of all men the least obnoxious to such accusations. So usually the best friends of mankind, those who most heartily wish the peace and prosperity of the world, and most earnestly to their power strive to promote them, have all the disturbances and disasters happening charged on them by those fiery vixens who, in pursuance of their base designs, or gratification of their wild passions, really do themselves embroil things, and raise miserable combustions in the world. So it is,

It appears to us that there can be no mystery whatever as to the immediate cause of the war. There were no doubt many causes, near and remote, concurring to produce that Eastern difficulty which was the pretext for the war. But there were two reasons and two only which rendered a pacific solution of the difficulty impossible. First, we had a Minister at Constantinople who set himself resolutely to thwart every attempt to compose the difference between Russia and the Porte until the slumbering fanaticism of the Turks had been so roused as to render all composition hopeless. Secondly, we had a public opinion at home so inflamed by the press into fury against Russia that it swept the Government as with the force of a hurricane into the war, we believe, against its own judgment and will.

that they who have the conscience to do mischief, will have the confidence also to disavow the blame and the iniquity, and to lay the burden of it on those who are most innocent.'—Barrow's *Sermon on Slander.*

CHAPTER XXIV.

EFFORTS DURING THE WAR AND AT ITS CONCLUSION.

Mr. Sturge's Sorrow at the War and its Effects—Letters to Mr. Tappan and Mr. Rhoades—Endeavours to allay the War Spirit—The Obloquy to which he was exposed—Accusations by some of his Fellow-citizens—His Replies—Letter to the Working Classes—Letters from Mr. Jay—Altered Feeling now as to the War—Conclusion of the War—Anxiety of the Peace Party to get Arbitration recognised in the new Treaties—Deputation to Lord Clarendon—His Lordship's Reply—Mr. Sturge determines to go to Paris—Communications with the Plenipotentiaries—Interview with Lord Clarendon—His Promise—How well redeemed—The Arbitration Protocol—Mr. Sturge's Letter to Lord Clarendon.

Soon after Mr. Sturge's return from St. Petersburgh the war broke out. Indeed the temper of the nation rendered that issue of the quarrel inevitable. It only remained for him, therefore, to use his best efforts, in conjunction with other friends of peace, to allay the war feeling. Discouraging as those efforts appeared at the time, it was impossible that he could do otherwise without denying his own nature. While the 'horrible and heart-rending scenes' going on in the Crimea, which soon began to bring home to the people the real nature of the work in which they had so lightly embarked, touched almost to anguish the heart of one so quick to sympathise with all forms of human suffering, he was, if possible, still more deeply pained in watching the disastrous moral effects which the war was producing at home in unchristianising the temper of multitudes, and diverting public attention from better objects.

His letters abound with allusions showing how much his heart was affected by this state of things. Writing to Mr. Tappan, November 18, 1854, he says :—

'I am going down hill both bodily and mentally; yet it is cause for thankfulness that we have been permitted so long the privilege of health and strength, and a disposition to labour, however feebly, for the amelioration of human suffering, and the promotion of human happiness. But I have often to lament my coldness in love to Him from whom all these blessings flow, and without whose redeeming mercy I can have no hope of being anchored in the haven of eternal rest. Our London Anti-Slavery Committee have decided upon a Conference of its Friends in this country with any foreign ones that can attend, to consider what can be done for the promotion of the cause. . . . . But this sad war absorbs almost all that is good, and promotes all that is evil.'

Again, in December of the same year, to the same friend, referring apparently to a proposal that had been made to him by Mr. Tappan to join in the purchase of an estate in Jamaica, for an experiment in free labour, he says :—

'I wrote thee very hastily in reply to thy proposition of purchasing an estate in Jamaica, in which I said that I should prefer placing 500 dollars at thy disposal towards the loss, leaving it to thy judgment to do with it as thou thought fit. Further reflection, and perhaps increased pressure on my time in consequence of this horrible all-absorbing war, has confirmed me in this view of the question. The fact is, that what little talents God has entrusted me with should, in the first place, be devoted to endeavouring to bring to an end this great national crime and calamity. It was under this feeling that, though I assented to the holding the Anti-Slavery Conference last month, and promised to assist in it, yet I could not enter into it with much interest. We have little right to admonish other nations on slavery, or anything else, while we are sending our people to commit wholesale murder on the terri-

tories of another sovereign, without, in my opinion, any just cause, even if such means were justifiable at any time. I have a little hope that the war feeling is not quite so rampant as it was. The fact that the meeting against John Bright, held at Manchester, failed in its intended object, and that only about 43 out of 6,000 of his former supporters signed the requisition for calling the meeting, is, I think, an indication of it.'

Again, writing to Mr. Samuel Rhoades, of Philadelphia, in February 1855, he excuses his remissness as a correspondent by saying :—

'The fact is that I have been discouraged by this horrid war, and feel that if I can be of any service in any way, my first duty is to cooperate with those who are endeavouring to allay the mad war-spirit so rife in my own country, that I have thought it right to abstain from taking much part in anything else. . . . . Thou wilt see by the newspapers that we are in a curious position as respects our Government. We had the greatest hope of Lord Aberdeen in regard to peace, and had he remained in office a few weeks longer, there was a fair prospect of its being attained, but now I fear we shall have a terrible slaughter again ere long at Sebastopol. John Bright and Richard Cobden are acting a noble part in resisting the war mania, and the fearful carnage it occasions, as well as the increasing sufferings amongst our poor, are bringing many over to their opinion who were a short time ago in favour of the war.'

Mr. Sturge was not a man to shrink from the avowal of his sentiments at such a time, whatever the obloquy it might bring upon him. And he had to endure his share of it, like all who dared to speak in deprecation of the war. For the first time at Birmingham he was refused a hearing, and even grossly insulted at a public meeting. A placard put up in the town, entitled 'War and dear Bread,' stating that the high price of corn

then prevailing was owing to the war, and quoting a passage from Miss Martineau's History to show how similar results had followed from the French war, had been ascribed to Mr. Sturge. It was thought worth while to bring the lady herself on the stage, and a letter from Miss Martineau was published in the Birmingham journals peremptorily denying that the war had anything to do with the high price of corn, though it might have been thought that the opinion of one of the leading corn-dealers in England was, on *that* question at least, as good an authority as that of the celebrated authoress. Anonymous letters were addressed to him, charging *him* with being the cause of the high price of bread. 'I warn you,' said one of these writers, 'for I hear it throughout the town, that if it is not lowered very soon something of a very serious nature will occur to disturb the peace of the town, and you will then be considered in a worse light than even Nicholas himself. You have it in your power to avert the dreadful event without any injury to yourself or the conspirators you act with. I advise you to take time by the forelock.' Mr. Sturge quietly replied in a letter to the papers:—'If the writer of this letter will give me his name I shall be glad to meet him and his friends, and if they can point out how *I* can lower the price of bread to the public, I shall rejoice to join them in any legitimate means to carry their plan into effect.'* Another corre-

* Even this charge, fantastic as it was, was not without its precedent, as Mr. Cobden reminded Mr. Sturge.

'It is amusing,' he says, 'to see the mad vagaries of the persons who charge *you* of all men with being the cause of dear bread! It reminds me of what occurred after the Great French war had produced its natural consequences—dear bread and want of employment—when the London mob in the neighbourhood of Spitalfields directed their vengeance against the Quakers as being the authors of their misery—the Quakers having been, be it remembered, almost the only people who steadily opposed the

spondent of one of the Birmingham journals charged him with having 'admitted before a committee of the House of Lords, a few years ago, that he had combined with other rich speculators to buy up English grain in various markets to raise the price thereof.' Again Mr. Sturge contented himself with quoting the passage in question from his evidence before a committee, not of the House of Lords (where he was never examined), but of the House of Commons, showing that the charge was not only not true, but in every respect the exact converse of the truth. Indeed, the language in which he was spoken of at that time by some of his fellow-citizens of Birmingham—specimens of which are now before us—was such as fills one now with surprise and sorrow, and would probably give sincere pain to those who used it, if it were now quoted. We forbear, therefore, further allusion to the circumstances of that unhappy period. Nor should we have alluded to them at all except as illustrative of one of the many evils attendant upon a state of war, that of throwing a whole community into what it is really difficult to describe otherwise than as a temporary insanity, which clouds its judgment, envenoms its heart, and transforms the naturally generous impulses of the people into such a paroxysm of mingled ferocity and fear, as prompts them to turn round and rend those whom they have been accustomed most to revere. Mr. Sturge ventured to remind his countrymen at the time of certain historical facts showing this tendency, in a letter which was published in one of the Birmingham journals, and also in the 'Times.' We think a few extracts from that letter will not be without interest:—

war for which the said mob were clamorous. You will see this referred to incidentally in the 1st vol. of the *Life of William Allen*, p. 50.'

'TO MY FELLOW-TOWNSMEN OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

'In the "Birmingham Journal" of last week, some of you may have read a letter from Harriet Martineau, together with editorial comments on a placard entitled "War and dear Bread," lately exhibited in Birmingham. I know not who was the author of the placard in question—which was printed at Manchester—but I do know the individual who caused it to be put up in Birmingham, and I think that in so doing he exercised not only an undoubted right, but a sound judgment.

'I entirely differ from the celebrated authoress of the letter referred to, which has since appeared in other papers, as to the present high price of bread not arising from the war. No one conversant with the foreign corn trade of this country would venture to assert that, could we be supplied from the shores of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azoff, the present rate of prices could be maintained. From five ports in these seas alone, upwards of thirty millions of bushels of wheat were shipped in 1853 to the United Kingdom and other parts of Europe. Wheat which is now worth 10*s.* per bushel in England can, at the present time, be bought in some of these ports at less than 2*s.* per bushel. The crop of 1854 in this part of the world was such as to justify the belief that, had peace continued, still more would have been supplied in 1854 and 1855. Not only is all this stopped by the war, but also exports from the Danube and several other quarters. . . . . .

'Though I may not live to see it, I have no doubt the time will come when the people of England will be better able to judge who are "doing the work of the enemy"—the advocates of peace, or the author of such articles as the one thus headed in the "Journal."

'We know from our past history it has unhappily been the invariable course of things in this country, that every war is at the outset almost unboundedly popular, while the few who have resisted the prevailing frenzy have as invariably been persecuted and stigmatised as doing the "enemy's work." Sir

Robert Walpole's opposition to the war in 1739, though now everybody admits it to have been, as T. B. Macaulay says, "altogether unjustifiable," "drew upon him," says his biographer, "odium and unpopularity from all quarters." In regard to our war with America, to prevent her obtaining her independence, Burke says that he was branded as "an American" for opposing it; "and all men," he adds, "who wished for peace, or retained any sentiment of moderation, were overcome or silenced." The city of Bristol, which he then represented, was so excited against him, that he declares "he would have sooner fled to the extremities of the earth than have shown himself there."

'In reference to the last war with France, so furious was the feeling of the country that Charles James Fox and the few men in and out of parliament who joined him in resisting the war could scarcely walk the streets without being hooted and mobbed as "jacobins," "traitors," "friends of the enemy," &c. I am told that among Gillray's caricatures, which held the place then that "Punch" does now, there is one representing Fox as a telegraph (such as telegraphs were then), standing on the Cliffs of Dover, signalling the French to come over; and Horner says in one of his letters, "I could name to you gentlemen with good coats on, and good sense in their own affairs, who believe that Fox is actually in the pay of France." But even Lord John Russell has said that "*that* war was unnecessary." Nor can we forget that the very same writers who have urged the Government into the present war are those who, two or three years ago, employed their utmost efforts to create a misunderstanding between this country and France, by heaping every kind of contumely upon the head of its ruler, whom they represented as a brigand waiting his opportunity to make a piratical descent upon the coast of England. Had they succeeded, it would have inevitably plunged us into war with that country; having failed in that object, and succeeding in forcing the Government into a war with Russia, though she has done us no wrong, they now eulogise the very man whom they formerly painted in such dark colours as utterly base, treacherous, and untrustworthy.

'The carnage which has already taken place in the Crimea, the voice of mourning which has been heard in many families in Great Britain, and the increased sufferings of the poor, may be but the commencement of the chastisements of Providence for our national crimes. May these considerations lead us, as a nation, to act more in accordance with that spirit which recognises all mankind as our brethren, and with the example of Him who "came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

'I remain, very sincerely, your friend,

'Joseph Sturge.

'Birmingham: 12th month 2, 1854.'

But while thus assailed at home, he received words of kindly greeting and encouragement from some of his correspondents abroad. His friend Judge Jay especially had followed the course of the war with intense interest. He was an eminently able man, full of love and admiration for England, and perhaps it may not be amiss to quote a few sentences from his letters, that we may have an opportunity for a moment of seeing ourselves as others saw us during that crisis in our history. Under date of February 25, 1855, he says:—

'I have paid great attention to the progress of the present war. I know you will not condemn my frankness when I say that the sin of your Government in commencing it, is equalled only by their folly in conducting it. That I might the more easily follow the operations of your fleet in the Baltic, I early purchased a chart of that sea. I was astonished on inspecting it to observe how very shallow was the water in the vicinity of the Russian fortresses, and I was puzzled to understand how your ships were to assail Cronstadt and approach St. Petersburgh; but I took for granted the Admiralty knew what they were about. But it seems Sir Charles, *after* his arrival, made the discovery that the water was too shoal for his ships! If there were no charts of the

Baltic to be procured in London, we could have furnished him with them, in which the soundings of the bays and harbours are laid down. So also it seems that Lord Raglan was unacquainted with the strength of Sebastopol, and expected to take it "right away," intending, perhaps, to make it his winter quarters, after capturing Odessa, &c. &c. An English baronet last spring assured me the war would be over by autumn, as Russia by that time would be brought to terms. Lord Aberdeen was, I believe, averse to the war. Had he had firmness enough to have resigned office rather than commence the work of human slaughter, he would have held a far higher place in your future history than he will now occupy.

'You Quakers, and those who act with you, are the real heroes of this war. Moral courage is of far higher quality than that which is animal. . . . .

'If convenient, I wish you would send me the tracts which have been issued by the Peace Society against the present war. God bless old England—for with all her faults I greatly love and admire her—and may she have a speedy deliverance from the disastrous conflict into which she has foolishly plunged.'

A few months later, and the same correspondent writes again :—

'All my sympathies in this contest are with Great Britain, and the more I admire your country the more do I deplore the false position in which she has placed herself. I have been disappointed in the moral independence of your statesmen. I fear Lord Aberdeen did violence to his conscience in supporting the war. Mr. Gladstone has uttered some excellent sentiments, but he too wants what we American abolitionists call "back-bone"—a fearless disregard of public opinion and personal popularity. The only prominent men in your parliament whom I really admire are those who are stigmatised as belonging to the Manchester school. Let them bide their time. Their death-bed will not be rendered uneasy by the recollection of their efforts in the cause of

peace, and the future will bear testimony to their *wisdom* and their *virtue*.'

In Mr. Sturge's own letter, which we have cited a page or two back, he expresses his belief that though he might not live to see it, the time would come when the judgment of England as to the necessity and wisdom of the war would undergo a change. Brief as was the time he survived this observation, he *did* see that change already beginning to declare itself, and had he been spared a year or two longer, he would have found the journal which assailed him and his companions so fiercely for trying to prevent the war, thus summing up what is probably become now the final conviction of most intelligent Englishmen; 'We must frankly own,' were the words of the 'Times' in 1861, 'that we feel somewhat more free to act like men and Christians now, than we could do five years ago. That ill-starred war, those half million of British, French, and Russian men left in the Crimea, those two hundred millions of money wasted in the worst of all ways, have discharged to the last iota all the debt of Christian Europe to Turkey. Never was so great an effort made for so worthless an object. . . . *It is with no small reluctance we admit a gigantic effort, and an infinite sacrifice, to have been made in vain.*'

When the war was brought to an end in 1856, and the representatives of the great Powers were met to settle the terms of peace, the friends of peace in this country felt it was a matter of great importance that the principle of stipulated arbitration, for which they had been so long contending, should, if possible, be recognised in the New Treaty, and so become a part, as it were, of the international law of Europe. A large and influential deputation, including some eighteen

or twenty members of parliament, waited upon Lord Palmerston with a Memorial from the Peace Congress Committee, earnestly urging upon Her Majesty's Government 'the importance of proposing at the conferences then sitting, some system of international arbitration which may bring the great interests of nations within the cognisance of certain fixed rules of justice and right.' Lord Palmerston received the deputation with all his wonted urbanity. But while acknowledging that 'associations like those there represented, though he could not go with them to the full extent, must yet have great influence on the general opinion of mankind, and greatly dispose men to prefer the solid advantages of peace to the more dazzling results of war;' his lordship raised all sorts of objections to the proposal, and left little ground to hope that his influence would be exerted in its favour.

The writer may perhaps be here permitted to indulge in an allusion of a somewhat personal nature, for the sake of illustrating some of those qualities of character in Mr. Sturge, which rendered his adhesion of such inestimable value to any cause with which he was associated. The biographer had a strong conviction that the friends of peace ought not to desist from their endeavours notwithstanding the discouraging answer of the prime minister. He insisted, with more perhaps of pertinacity than prudence, that they should proceed to Paris, and try to bring the matter before the attention of the plenipotentiaries, and through them of the various sovereigns they represented. But he found little response to this proposal. Many of those with whom it had been his pleasure and honour so long to work in this great question were at the moment somewhat disheartened by the

course of events and by Lord Palmerston's reply, and thought no good end would be answered by such a proceeding as he suggested, if it did not, indeed, do positive harm by exposing the cause and its abettors to ridicule. Several gentlemen who were invited to join in such a mission declined the invitation. Unable, however, to rid himself of the impression that they would fail at a most critical moment in the duty which devolved upon them as those who had assumed the advocacy of a great principle, if they shrank from making another attempt to bring it before the august assembly then sitting in Paris, he opened his heart to Joseph Sturge. His reply was frank, instant, cordial. 'Thou art right,' was his language. 'If no one else will go with thee, I will; and I am prepared to go not only to Paris, but if necessary to Berlin, Vienna, Turin, and even to St. Petersburgh should there be time, and see if we can't get access to the various sovereigns whose plenipotentiaries are sitting at Paris.' We determined therefore to go. Afterwards Mr. Charles Hindley, member of parliament for Ashton, kindly agreed to accompany us. A memorial was drawn up in which the subject was presented in the best light and with the best skill and earnestness we could command. And having prepared copies of this document addressed to each of the imperial and royal personages represented in the Congress, we proceeded to the French metropolis. Our first step was to place the memorial in the hands of the plenipotentiaries, with an earnest request that it might be transmitted to their respective sovereigns, at the same time furnishing each of them with a copy. We have reason to believe that this was done in the majority of instances, if not in all. Communications to this effect were received from Count Walewski, Count Cavour, and the Prussian ministers,

who indeed told us at a personal interview that when, according to our wishes, they forwarded the memorial to the king their master, His Majesty had immediately replied instructing them earnestly to sustain our proposal if it were brought before the Congress. But the question with the deputation was, how can it be brought before the Congress? Their only hope was in Lord Clarendon, who had received them, when they waited upon him with so much of genial sympathy for their object and frank cordiality of manner as cheered them not a little, and still dwells gratefully in the memory of the only survivor of the deputation. He also started some difficulties, especially as regards the binding nature of the engagement to submit future differences to arbitration which the memorial recommended. 'Still, gentlemen,' said his lordship, 'I will do what I can to bring the matter before the Congress.'

With this promise the deputation were fain to be content, and after remaining at Paris for three weeks they departed with no very sanguine hopes of success, sustained only by the consciousness that they had endeavoured to the best of their ability to do what they had felt it their duty to attempt. But when several weeks later the protocols of the Congress were published, they found that Lord Clarendon had, indeed, most loyally redeemed his promise, and had introduced the question to his colleagues with a force and earnestness which proved that his heart was thoroughly in the matter. He was immediately sustained by the French and Prussian Plenipotentiaries, and ultimately a resolution was unanimously passed recognising the duty of having recourse to arbitration, not indeed in the binding form which the memorialists had ventured to recommend, but still in a form sufficiently distinct and emphatic to

give to the great principle the full sanction of that august assembly.

The text of the protocol is as follows:—

'The plenipotentiaries do not hesitate to express, in the name of their Governments, the wish that States between which any serious misunderstandings may arise, should, before appealing to arms, have recourse, so far as circumstances might allow, to the good offices of a friendly power. The plenipotentiaries hope that the Governments not represented at the Congress will unite in the sentiment which has inspired the wish recorded in the present protocol.'

The extreme value of 'this happy innovation,' as it was called by Lord Clarendon, was recognised at the time, as it has been often since by some of our leading statesmen. In the discussion which took place at the opening of parliament respecting the conditions of peace, Mr. Gladstone said, 'As to the proposal to submit international differences to arbitration, I think that is in itself a very great triumph, a powerful engine in behalf of civilisation and humanity. It is, perhaps, the first time that the representatives of the principal nations of Europe have given an emphatic utterance to sentiments which contain, at least, a qualified disapproval of a resort to war, and asserted the supremacy of reason, of justice, humanity, and religion.' The Earl of Derby, on a subsequent occasion, referred to it as 'the principle which, to its endless honour, was embodied in the protocols by the Conference of Paris.' The Earl of Malmesbury has pronounced this act of the Conference as 'one of the most important to civilisation and to the security of the peace of Europe,' because 'it recognised and established the immortal truth, that time, by giving place for reason to operate, is as much a preventive as a healer of hostilities.'

Mr. Sturge was deeply moved with a sense of gratitude to Lord Clarendon for the part he had acted in this matter, and wrote to his lordship as follows:—

'To Lord Clarendon.

'I know of how little value the approbation of an humble individual like myself must be to those in high station; and in the present instance the expression of it may perhaps be impertinent. But I can hardly feel excused without expressing my sincere thanks to Lord Clarendon for so fully acting upon the promise he was kind enough to give, when, with my friend Charles Hindley and Henry Richard, I had the pleasure of seeing him at Paris—that he would do what he could to promote the recognition by the Conference of the principle of reference or arbitration for the settlement of future international disputes. Though what has been done may not be all some of us could wish, yet it is perhaps quite as much as we could reasonably expect. I believe it would be difficult to estimate too highly the great moral effect of the Protocol No. 23 being unanimously adopted by such a Conference as the one which lately sat in Paris. I am persuaded that with the advance of civilisation and Christianity in the world, there will be far more genuine glory connected with the name of him that proposed such a means of preserving peace, than with that of the greatest military conqueror. But my earnest desire is, that when Lord Clarendon shall arrive at that final tribunal towards which we are all hastening, when all human praise or censure will be alike indifferent, he may receive the reward of the peacemaker, and, through a Saviour's love, be admitted into that kingdom where war and discord are unknown.

'Very respectfully,

'Joseph Sturge.'

Lord Clarendon wrote a most kind reply, which has been unhappily mislaid, expressing his pleasure at having received such a communication, and informing

Mr. Sturge that he hoped there would be a much wider application given to the principle affirmed in the Paris protocol, because the great Powers who were parties to that agreement were inviting all the other Governments of the civilised world to give in their adhesion to it. We believe they have done so without an exception.

CHAPTER XXV.

MISSION TO FINLAND.

Destruction of Private Property by the British during the War—Account of the Merchants of Uleaborg—The Poor plundered—The Admirals in the Baltic opposed to this System—Distress of the People—Mr. Sturge is touched with the Story of their Sufferings—Determines to visit Finland—Mr. Thomas Harvey accompanies him—Extracts from Mr. Sturge's Letters—Helsingfors—Tamersfors—Abo—Nyistad—Evidence of the Sufferers—Influence of these Acts of Spoliation on the Feelings of the Inhabitants—Committee of Relief formed at Abo—Subscription opened in England for relieving the Finns—How it was administered—Good Effect on the Minds of the Inhabitants—Acknowledgment from the Emperor of Russia—The Conquest of Finland—Mr. Whittier's Lines.

But there was another matter arising out of the Russian war that engaged Mr. Sturge's attention in 1856. It is well known that during the war the property of unarmed citizens, not merely at sea but on land, was to a large extent destroyed by the British fleet, especially in the Gulf of Bothnia and the Sea of Azoff. As a specimen, we may give the account which the committee of which we are presently to speak received 'through an English mercantile house' of what took place at Uleaborg. It was verified by the names of the principal merchants in the place, 'who declared on oath' that in that port 'there was not,' to quote their own rather imperfect English, 'and had not been for the Russian Government's account, anything contraband, no gunboats or other vessels of war built or meant to be built, neither was there in the town the least property belonging to the Russian Government, no fortifi-

cation or necessaries of war, no military or other means of defence of what name soever, and therefore all the property destroyed by the admiral was private.' The inhabitants, 'incited by the piteous fate of Brahestadt,' had sent out a flag of truce to the admiral as he drew near their town, who promised not to molest or injure private persons or their property.' Feeling, therefore, that they were perfectly safe, since there were no soldiers, fortresses, nor contraband of war of any kind near the place, the deputation returned joyfully, and assured their fellow-townsmen they had nothing to fear. But notwithstanding the admiral's promise, here follows the description of what took place:—

'About two o'clock in the morning of June 2, the English were let loose, and soon thirteen vessels, of which six large ones were on the stocks, were in flames, besides seven ship-building yards with all the materials; the houses, mast-ware-houses, smithies, &c., tar depôts, with about 15,000 barrels of tar; the entire place called Sundbacken, with from fifteen to twenty ship cargoes of timber, deal, and spars; sixty ware-houses with all the goods in them; several thousand fathoms of firewood, and all the costly harbour piles with the piers. This awful fire, which, like a sea driven by the storm, sent its swelling waves up to the clouds, was, in the light spring night, as horrible as it was frightening, as the entire destruction of the town in the dry weather seemed certain. But Providence willed it otherwise. The wind, which the whole day before and just before the kindling was in the north-west, and would have covered the town with fire, shifted now to the north-east and drove on a storm. Dark watery clouds hastened, driven by the storm, over the town, and the pouring rain, together with the snow and sleet, helped, if not to extinguish, at least to check the destroying fire which now and then flamed up from between pillars of smoke, and still smouldered, a fortnight after, amid the ruins. Meanwhile the incendiaries proceeded to set fire to all that stood

in their way, magazines with seed, glass, salt, furs, household articles, &c., which were plundered with especial eagerness.'

But this, though bad enough, was not the worst. Not only were merchant ships found in various commercial ports, and vast stores of timber and corn, &c., consigned to the flames, but the small possessions of the humblest classes were either destroyed, or seized and carried away without payment. The poor fisherman's boat and nets, the small farmer's sheep and cattle, and even the scanty furniture and clothing in the peasant's cottage did not escape the depredations of British sailors and soldiers. All this was as impolitic as it was cruel, for it could not in the least have affected the objects or duration of the war, and may, indeed, be said to have been politically useful to the Russian Government, by exasperating into hostility a portion of its subjects who were previously singularly well-disposed towards England. It is but fair to say, that this conduct was by no means universal on the part of Her Majesty's ships visiting those shores. The Commanders on certain parts of the coast behaved in a generous and honourable manner, doing no damage to private property and taking nothing without compensation. It was understood, moreover, that both Admiral Dundas and Admiral Napier strongly disapproved of the system of wanton conflagration and pillage adopted or permitted by some of their officers. But it is one of the manifold curses of war, that it puts a terrible power in the hands of the rash, the reckless, and the ruthless. There cannot be a doubt that the work of havock committed was sufficiently extensive to inflict great and general suffering on the unfortunate Finlanders on many parts of the coast. A correspondent of the

'Times,' writing from Nisby, the chief port of Gothland, under date of June 23, 1854, thus describes what he witnessed :—'The number of fugitive Finns increases here every day. Whoever walks round our harbour sees a vast number of ragged people lying about on the stones, whose nocturnal abode is the tents they have contrived out of tattered sails. One shriek of woe sounds through all Finland! It will take many years before those wretched outcasts regain the point which they had hitherto by great assiduity obtained. All their vessels of any size are in the hands of the English, and the smaller ones totally destroyed. All the stock of timber and pitch that they are wont to export to Denmark, and even Germany, in the spring, and which constitutes their chief source of livelihood, is reduced to ashes. Anything and everything that might possibly be useful to the Russians has been destroyed.' We forbear to mention the names of individual officers who distinguished themselves in this ignoble warfare.

The wail of the unfortunate sufferers reduced thus to extremity of distress by British hands, and by acts which were in violation of even the cruel 'laws of war,' floated across the seas, penetrated into the quiet retreat of Edgbaston, and struck on the ear of one whose heart was sensitively attuned to 'the still sad music of humanity.' Mr. Sturge could find no rest without making an effort for their relief; and in order to do this in the most effectual manner, he determined to go in person and explore the true state of the case on the spot. He was happy enough to secure the companionship and aid of his old friend and colleague in his West Indian tour Mr. Thomas Harvey, of Leeds. This gentleman, on his return, wrote a series of graphic letters descriptive of

the whole journey, which appeared in one of the morning papers. From these we should have been glad, had our space permitted, to have cited largely, as they relate to a route of travel seldom visited by the British tourist. For even the ubiquitous 'Murray,' at that time at least, only conducted the pilgrim just along the margin of the coast, then adding :—'It is hardly to be imagined that any motives sufficiently strong will tempt a traveller to visit the wilds of a country, the scenery of which cannot bear comparison with that either of Sweden or Norway.' But though love of the adventurous and the picturesque might not prove sufficing motives to tempt men to explore those untrodden regions, the strong power of Christian benevolence supplied an adequate impulse.

Messrs. Sturge and Harvey having reached Lubeck by railway, embarked at that place on the 9th of September 1856, in a steamer for Helsingfors, which they reached on the 15th. Having there provided themselves with a suitable conveyance, and an interpreter acquainted with the Swedish and Finnish languages, they proceeded to Tamersfors, and from there to Abo, and Nyistad, and Raumo, then back again to Abo, and thence through Borga, Louisa, Fredericksham, and Wyborg, to St. Petersburg. They stopped at various points in their journey to investigate the facts for themselves, and to consult with certain benevolent persons on the spot, as to the best means of administering relief to the sufferers. At Nyistad and Raumo especially, they saw a considerable number of the unfortunate people whose property had been plundered or destroyed, and took down their statements from their own lips. Some of the cases were very painful and affecting.

We may introduce here a few extracts from Mr. Sturge's letters written during this journey :—

'We arrived at Helsingfors about eleven o'clock, and though we were detained on board by the custom house regulations, the captain kindly sent a boat off from shore for our letters and forwarded them by the captain of another steamer who was a friend of his, and who was going before we got on shore. These letters we understood would be in the post office at Lubeck on 5th day night or 6th day morning, so that you would I expect, from a combination of favourable circumstances, hear from us from Finland about a fortnight after we left home. This we little expected. Our only letter of introduction here was to a gentleman who is now from home. No one there could speak English when we called, but a gentleman was sent for who could, who had been travelling through Finland with the Governor-General this summer. Though we did not tell him the object of our mission, he gave up the afternoon to us, assisted us in getting what Russian money was wanted and getting a new passport, which we found was needful. We found that the only posting here is by one rough two-wheeled vehicle, and that we are about 150 miles from the point we want to reach. We therefore bought a comfortable carriage in which we can sleep at night for about 20*l*., which this gentleman used in travelling with the Governor-General. There are not more than one or two persons in the whole of this place of about 16,000 inhabitants that can speak English well, but we have engaged a sailor, who understands tolerably English, and Swedish, and the Finland language, to go with us to Tamersfors, where we hope to be on 4th day evening if we get off from here at eleven to-morrow and travel all night. The gentleman's name, who has so much assisted us, is Frederick Lerche, and without telling him exactly the object of our visit, we have ascertained enough to confirm my previous impressions and to strengthen my belief that our coming is well timed. This harbour is one of the finest I have ever seen. The fortress of Sweaborg, which was destroyed by the English and French fleets, has been but partially rebuilt, but the destruction of other buildings is not so great as I expected to see, and no houses were destroyed here. A large Russian man-of-war is still

partially sunk in one of the entrances of the harbour, and I am assured there were not more than fifty Russians killed, and those nearly all soldiers, by the attack of the combined fleets on the fortifications. The powder magazine is on a granite rock inside the harbour, and as none of the bombs or shells appear to have reached it, it was not blown up. Some of the roofs of the houses here are painted green, and the domes, five in number, of the principal church a rich blue with gilt stars, which gives it rather a gay appearance. There is a college here of about 400 students, of which the present Emperor, before the death of his father, was president, and he appears to be a great favourite here.'

'Tamersfors: 9th mo: 17, 1856.

'2 o'clock.—We arrived here about an hour ago. We were unable to get our carriage and start off, until about one o'clock yesterday, and we posted all night; it took us about twenty-four hours to come the hundred and fifty miles. F. Uhden had written to us at Abo yesterday. T. Harvey has seen him, and he is to call upon us presently. I was anxious to push on here, fearing he might have left home to meet us at Abo. We found the roads better than I expected, and got some sleep in our carriage, though it is open in front. Thomas Harvey tells me it has cost us about 3*l.* to come here from Helsingfors, or about $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ per mile for three horses, double fares for driving, and our meals on the road; in England it would have cost near 20*l.* A great part of the road has been through pine forest, sometimes interspersed with silver birch. Since daylight this morning we have seen many lakes, some of them of great extent, and the scenery round them often very beautiful. We have been told that one-third of Finland is lake and one-third granite.

'6th. 2 o'clock.—Ferdinand Uhden has been with us most of the afternoon, and we are very much pleased with him. He enters heartily into the object of our mission, and thinks it will have a very good moral effect. He is lame himself, but has furnished us with an interpreter, and gives us introductions which he thinks will enable us to get at all the facts

of the case we want within fifty miles of Abo; and he is willing, in concert with some other gentlemen on whom he can fully depend, to see that the subscriptions from England are applied, as far as is possible, to the parties we wish should be relieved. We start for Abo at four o'clock to-morrow morning, and hope to get there at ten o'clock to-morrow night. Thy letter only got here, I believe, yesterday; the post has just left for England *viâ* Petersburgh, and is a fortnight in going; so I mean to post my next letters from Abo. We have been to look at the factory with which F. U. is connected; they employ about 1,000 hands, and the fall of water is at the bottom of a lake about 100 miles long. The history of its establishment is almost as romantic as the scenery by which it is surrounded; but I am too tired to tell it to-night, and we are to see F. U. again. The present Emperor, and all his brothers with him, were here last winter and dined with them, and he says that when the children in their Sunday-school sang a hymn to him he saw the tears in his eyes, and afterwards he pronounced his blessing upon them.'

'Abo: Sept. 19.

'Yesterday morning we started about half-past five o'clock, accompanied by a young man as interpreter. We also brought our sailor on here. Though the day was mostly wet, we could but enjoy the splendid scenery on the lakes. They are studded with islands, clothed with beautiful timber, so placed and planted by nature that it would have been almost impossible to have done it with more effect had they been arranged by the most skilful landscape gardener. In consequence of the badness of the roads from the rainy weather, we did not arrive here until about five o'clock this morning instead of about eleven at night as we hoped. The posting horses were much worse than they were in Russia, and though we took one more than the usual number, they had been so badly jaded that at some of the stages they were unable to go much beyond a walking pace; and though our carriage has held out quite as well as we could expect, yet with six persons and luggage, and going at times very fast over very bad roads,

it is not surprising that one of the springs gave way yesterday afternoon, and but for the skill of our sailor interpreter in the use of rope, combined with that of a Finlander at one of the stations in the use of his hatchet and knife, by which they patched it up so that it carried us well here, we might have been detained a day by it. We are here at a comfortable hotel, called also the Society House; and after getting a few hours' rest in bed, and a good breakfast, we both, I think, feel as well as when we left home. We have just been to call upon Enrick Julin, to whom Ferdinand Uhden had already written to inform him of the object of our journey, and one of our letters from Newcastle was also addressed. As far as we can judge, it would have been almost impossible to have found a man more suited to give us advice and counsel. He does not speak English, but he has a son about twenty-five or thirty who does, and who interpreted in this case for us, and who appeared to enter into all his father's views and feelings; indeed it is a privilege to see such apparent noble qualities in two generations of the same family. He (the son) is going to start with us as far as Nyistad and Raumo at five o'clock to-morrow morning, and we shall probably not be back here until third day morning, but it will probably not be needful for us to go farther north. Thomas Harvey has just been remarking that things have fallen in so well without our contriving, that we may hope it is a providential indication that our mission is a right one—a feeling that I have been encouraged with before he mentioned it. I seemed to require something of this—for in some of the friends on whose judgment I a good deal rely, I thought there was rather more of sympathy with me than with the object, and I was at one time led to fear from this that I undertook it in my own will, and perhaps improperly influenced by Providence having placed at my disposal a sum of money which I could thus apply with a due regard to other claims upon me.'

'Abo: 9th mo: 22, 1856.

'. . . As John Julin is pressed for time, we entered at once on the examination of some who were sent for to give

proof of the way our soldiers had robbed them of their little property. This occupied us about two hours, and we started about three o'clock for Raumo, where we arrived about eight. On second day morning we saw and examined several cases in which the British had plundered the poor people; but Thomas Harvey has taken down the particulars of these, and you can get a copy of them on our return. One case was particularly touching—that of a poor widow of very interesting appearance, who wept much while she gave her statement, which was that the British had destroyed her husband's little vessel, and also their cargo of wood which was on shore, which included not only the whole of their own small property of about 50*l.*, but that of some friends who had helped them to build the vessel. Her husband died two or three months ago, of what would be called a broken heart, and left her with a child of four years of age, not only without support, but she would have to go through the bankruptcy court. This was fully confirmed by others.'

In a report of their mission, printed, but not published, on their return, the deputation stated that they found the good feeling previously existing among the population towards England was changed in the breasts of many into one of bitter animosity. 'Exasperation and burning indignation' were the words employed to describe to them the feeling that prevailed. But they add:—

'We must do the persons we examined the justice to say that no disposition was shown to exaggerate their grievances. The merchants did not obtrude their own losses on our notice, and we ascertained them only by direct inquiry. Need it be said that it was evident the reputation of our country had suffered deeply in the estimation of those simple, honest-hearted people, through the lawless proceedings of our navy? Formerly, no country stood so high in the esteem and affection of the Finn; but now, as one of the poor fishermen said to us, "they can't think of the English as before." The more intelligent, of course, made distinctions, as thus: "The

navy is not the nation," and "There are rascals in every country," &c. F. Uhden had before remarked to us that the printing of 100,000 copies, by the British and Foreign Bible Society, of the New Testament, and the Psalms, in their own language, had made a deep impression on the Finnish people; but after the ravages committed on the property of unarmed and unoffending fishermen and peasants, during the war, the cry was, "Can these be the English—our friends?" to which he sometimes replied, "The English who send you the Bible are not the same persons as the English who carry on the war."'

Before Messrs. Sturge and Harvey quitted the country a committee was formed at Abo, consisting of Ferdinand Uhden, Erick Julin, John Julin, and a number of other respectable merchants, who undertook, subject to the approval of Count Berg, Governor General of Finland, which after some hesitation was obtained, on the application of Joseph Sturge, to distribute any funds that might be placed at their disposal for the relief of the poorer sort of persons who had suffered during the war.

It had been the intention of Joseph Sturge to proceed from St. Petersburgh to the shores of the Sea of Azoff, and endeavour there to make a similar investigation for the same object. His friend Joseph Cooper had undertaken to accompany him on that part of the journey, and had proceeded as far as Riga with that view. But, after reaching the capital, the consideration of the lateness of the season, and some uncertainty which then existed, but which was afterwards happily removed, as to the willingness of the Russian Government to allow of the distribution of relief from England, determined him to return home direct.

As the distress of the poor people seemed urgent, Joseph Sturge and his companion at once authorised the

local committee to expend 20,000 silver roubles, which, on behalf of a committee to be formed in England, they engaged to furnish. As soon as they reached this country a private appeal was prepared and a subscription started, headed by Joseph and Charles Sturge with the munificent sum of 1,000*l.* Their first idea was to appeal only to their personal friends, in order out of the funds so raised to reimburse some of the poorest of those that had been despoiled, and especially to replace boats, nets, and other articles, which not only constituted their property, but were their means of subsistence. But it soon became apparent that the failure of the crops and the early closing of the navigation, owing to the severity of the winter 1856–7, coming upon the previous sufferings of the war, would plunge the inhabitants of a considerable part of the Grand Duchy into the extremity of distress. The committee formed on the return of Messrs. Sturge and Harvey determined, therefore, to give a wider scope to their applications. Mr. Sturge worked indefatigably in promoting this object. Eventually a sum of nearly 9,000*l.* was raised, the contributors being principally, though by no means exclusively, members of the Society of Friends, while the administration of the fund was left entirely in the hands of that body. This duty they performed with their wonted energy and discretion. With the money so raised, corn, meal, potatoes, 'clothing for naked children,' seed-corn for future harvests, fishing nets, &c. were purchased and distributed among the people, the native merchants and the Lutheran clergy gladly undertaking all the details. It is hardly necessary to say that this work of Christian charity was attended with the happiest effects, not only in relieving the distress of the people, but in softening their hearts. 'On behalf of all the suffering poor,' wrote one corre-

spondent, 'who have received food and clothes out of the 50*l.* received from you for that purpose, I beg to return you their most heartfelt thanks. "God bless the English gentlemen!" has already been uttered by many lips.' 'We wish,' said another, 'to express the joy which this subscription has excited, both amongst us and amongst all our friends who have already been informed of it, not only on account of the relief afforded, but also for the sympathy shown for our country.' And Mr. E. Julin of Abo, writing to Mr. Sturge, says, after describing the use he had made of the money entrusted to him:—'I shall consider the thought of having happened to be the means of accomplishing so blessed a work, as a complete compensation. I am sure that the feeling of good-will of the Finnish nation towards England and Englishmen, that certainly became weakened during the war, is now regained, which may be observed in part by the spirit in which the certificates are written.' The 'certificates' referred to were a kind of receipt given by those to whom aid was granted. And a deputation of Friends, consisting of Mr. Wilson Sturge (one of Joseph Sturge's nephews) and Mr. George Baker, who went to Finland in 1857 to visit the places to which help had been sent, were able to conclude their report thus:—

'We believe it will be gratifying to the Committee, and to the subscribers generally, to learn that those feelings of hostility and bitterness towards England on the part of the Finns, which were caused by the wanton and unjustifiable destruction of private property by our cruisers during the war, and the reports of which had not been exaggerated, are now being effectually removed by the knowledge that the friendly hand of help from England has been spontaneously and generously extended towards them, at a time when Finland was suffering from famine and its attendant evils.'

And finally, Joseph Sturge received through the secretary of the Embassy in London, Baron Nicolay, the following graceful acknowledgment of the generous kindness shown by himself and his co-subscribers to the poor Finlanders, from the Emperor of Russia :—

'Russian Embassy, London : July 13, 1857.

'DEAR SIR,—In the absence of H. E. Count Chreptowich, I have been instructed, by command of the Emperor, to convey to the subscribers to the fund which has been raised in this country for the purpose of alleviating the calamities of famine in Finland, His Imperial Majesty's thanks for their liberal and charitable donations.

'To you, sir, and your friends, to whose generous exertions on behalf of my unfortunate countrymen these thanks are especially due, I address myself, in the hope that you will kindly enable me to fulfil the orders I have received, by making known to the numerous subscribers who responded to your appeal the grateful sense His Imperial Majesty entertains of their conduct.

'Believe me, dear sir, to be yours sincerely,

'NICOLAY

'To Joseph Sturge, Esq.'

We need not wonder to hear, that when three years afterwards tidings of his death reached the shores of the Baltic, there were mourning and tears in the cottages of Finnish fishermen and peasants. Joseph Sturge had tried Christ's method of conquering an enemy, 'If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink:' and he had succeeded in winning the only victory really worth winning, that which 'slays the enmity' and subdues the affections of the heart. Justly, therefore, did Mr. Whittier give to the beautiful poem he wrote on hearing of his friend's mission—and

which we are very sure our readers will thank us for reproducing here—the title of

THE CONQUEST OF FINLAND.*

Across the frozen marshes
The winds of autumn blow,
And the fen-lands of the Wetter
Are white with early snow.

But where the low grey headlands
Look o'er the Baltic brine,
A bark is sailing in the track
Of England's battle-line.

No wares hath she to barter
For Bothnia's fish and grain:
She saileth not for pleasure,
She saileth not for gain.

But still by isle or mainland
She drops her anchor down,
Where'er the British cannon
Rained fire on tower and town.

Out spoke the ancient Amptman,
At the gate of Helsingfors:
'Why comes this ship a-spying
In track of England's wars?'

'God bless her,' said the coast-guard,
'God bless the ship, I say;
The holy angels trim the sails
That speed her on her way!

'Where'er she drops her anchor,
The peasant's heart is glad:
Where'er she spreads her parting sail,
The peasant's heart is sad.

'Each wasted town and hamlet
She visits to restore:
To roof the shattered cabin,
And feed the starving poor.

* A late letter from England, in the *Friends' Review*, says: 'Joseph Sturge with a companion, Thomas Harvey, has been visiting the shores of Finland to ascertain the amount of mischief and loss to the poor and peaceable sufferers occasioned by the gunboats of the allied squadrons in the late war, with a view to obtaining relief for them.'—*Mr. Whittier's note.*

'The sunken boats of fishers,
The foraged beeves and grain,
The spoil of flake and storehouse,
The good ship brings again.

'And so to Finland's sorrow
The sweet amend is made,
As if the healing hand of Christ
Upon her wounds were laid.'

Then said the grey old Amptman,
'The will of God be done!
The battle lost by England's hate
By England's love is won!

'We braved the iron tempest,
That thundered on our shore,
But when did kindness fail to find
The key to Finland's door?

'No more from Aland's ramparts
Shall warning signal come,
Nor startled Sweaborg hear again
The roll of midnight drum.

'Beside our fierce black eagle
The dove of Peace shall rest;
And in the mouth of cannon
The sea-bird make her nest.

'For Finland, looking seaward,
No coming foe can scan;
And the holy bells of Abo
Shall ring "Good-will to man!"

'Then row thy boat, O fisher!
In peace on lake and bay;
And thou, young maiden, dance again
Around the poles of May.

'Sit down old men together,
Old wives in quiet spin;
Henceforth the Anglo-Saxon
Is brother of the Finn!'

CHAPTER XXVI.

NEW JOURNALS—INDIAN MUTINY—SIR JAMES BROOKE.

The Peace Party not fairly represented in the Press—Effect of this during the Russian War—Remedy for this Evil—Mr. Sturge's Reluctance to take the matter in hand—At last consents, and prosecutes it with great Energy—The 'Morning' and 'Evening Star' started—The Indian Mutiny—Mr. Sturge's dissatisfaction with our Policy in the East—Letters on the Mutiny—His Desire for an Enquiry into Native Grievances—Consults Mr. Dickinson of the India Reform Association—Offers to bear the Expense of a Commission to India—Could not find a suitable Person for the Service—Determines to go himself—Invites the Biographer to accompany him—Reasons why this Design was not accomplished—Sir James Brooke—Proposition urged upon the Chambers of Commerce—Mr. Sturge opposes it at Birmingham—The Reasons why—Buys an Estate in the West Indies.

We must now advert to another enterprise in which Mr. Sturge was engaged in the years 1855–56, and which was singularly illustrative of the indomitable energy of his character. It had long been felt by the Peace party in this country that they were placed at great disadvantage by the want of an organ among the daily press, which should fairly interpret and firmly maintain and defend their principles before the world. This inconvenience became more than ever apparent at the time of the Russian war; for during that paroxysm of national passion all the ordinary laws of fair play were habitually violated, as respects the men of peace, by the journals which had then exclusive possession of the public ear. Not only were their views misrepresented, their measures caricatured, and their motives maligned,

but it was next to impossible to have facts, documents, and public proceedings bearing on their side of the question fairly reported. It was determined therefore, that as soon as those fiscal laws relative to the press which were then in operation, and which were justly described as 'taxes on knowledge,' were partially repealed, an effort should be made to start a paper, not, indeed, to be the organ of the Peace Society, or to propagate what are called 'the extreme views' held by the Society of Friends and others on the subject of war; but a paper that, combined with the advocacy of all liberal principles, should specially contend for a pacific policy at home and abroad, and commend to the country and to the world such principles as those of non-intervention, the settlement of international disputes by arbitration, and the gradual and simultaneous reduction of European armaments. But when it came to be considered how this project was to be carried into effect, all eyes, as usual, turned to Joseph Sturge as the man that was to do it, if it were to be done. At first, and for some time, he displayed unwonted repugnance to take the matter in hand. He had often before, he said, been concerned either in establishing, or helping to sustain newspapers started avowedly for the diffusion, and defence of certain principles. But with one or two exceptions, to which he referred, the results had not been satisfactory. Generally, they had by degrees, in their anxiety to catch the breeze of popular favour, swerved widely from the course they had professed and promised to follow, and in some cases he and his friends had had the mortification of feeling that the money and influence they had contributed to such undertakings were actually employed to give currency to a spirit and to principles utterly alien from those which they

cherished, and had hoped to subserve. His objections, however, were ultimately overcome, and when he did take the work in hand, he prosecuted it with an energy and persistency that were irresistible. Others might and did hesitate, and waver, and become discouraged. But he did not; having once taken the purpose to heart, he held it with a firm resolve, and would not rest until it was translated into act. By journeys, correspondences, conferences, and the use of the great influence he possessed, especially in his own Society, he secured the means that were necessary, and surmounted all the obstacles that stood in the way of accomplishing the object. From a large number of letters on the subject to the biographer, who had long and strenuously pressed this matter upon his friend, it is only necessary to cite one, dated September 9, 1855 :—

'My dear Friend,—I returned from my journey to the North this week, and have succeeded quite as well as I expected with regard to funds for the paper. The question now is to have it put on quite a safe footing with regard to its principles, and I see this will greatly depend upon getting the right man for the chief editor. I had a satisfactory interview with —— and —— at Manchester, and have no doubt of their doing what they can to secure this. The paper, I fear, cannot be out before the end of the year, but they think it possible they will be able to get a press to throw off 24,000 per hour. They were not prepared to fix a day for our meeting in Manchester. When shalt thou be back? I am uneasy that we are doing so little just now. Though, with the press all against us, our lectures would not be reported, we might still do something by tracts and placards.'

Ultimately he had the satisfaction of seeing the 'Morning' and 'Evening Star' fairly launched; and we can form no better wish for these journals, if they would subserve the cause of truth, justice, and humanity, than

that they should be conducted as much as possible on the principles and in the spirit of Joseph Sturge.

It will be remembered how, about the middle of 1857, England and the world were startled by that fearful volcanic eruption in India which so rudely disturbed our long dream of security and shook the foundation of our empire in that country. Joseph Sturge, like many other Christian men, had long had a fear lying heavily upon his heart, that the high-handed policy we had been and still were pursuing in the East must sooner or later entail upon us a bitter retribution. The recent bombardment of Canton, and the war with China to which it had led, and which, indeed, was then on hand, had only served to deepen that conviction. In a letter under date of April 4, 1857, written to a friend who had invited him to join in some form of appeal or remonstrance to the Americans on the subject of slavery, he declines the invitation, and says :—

'The fact is, I think nations as well as individuals should take the beam out of their own eye before they attempt to draw the mote out of their brother's eye. While we have such dreadful national guilt lying at our own door, in connection with our wars and massacres, I think it is everyone's Christian duty to try to get these things put a stop to before we cast a stone at the guilt of other nations, even though it be that of slavery in the United States. As to uniting in such an act with ——, or anyone who has sanctioned the Canton massacre, I cannot do it. Were I an American slaveholder, or supporter of slavery, I believe I should consider it mere hypocrisy and cant to appeal to me to alter my views or conduct on the ground of Christianity or humanity, while we are approving such deeds at home. This does not apply, I know, to some of our anti-slavery friends, and perhaps to none of those who have signed the document in question, but I feel that any little strength I have left to labour should be now directed into a different channel.'

When the awful details of the mutiny reached this country, Joseph Sturge, while sharing in the universal horror at the sanguinary outrages of the Sepoys, could not separate these acts from the previous history of our dealings in India. Writing to an American friend, January 22, 1858, he says:—

'It would appear as though Providence were about to visit us for our national guilt by this rebellion in India. I doubt if there are much blacker pages in history than those which record our conduct in India and China. Many of the facts have never fully come to light, but there were enough known to have induced a Christian nation to put a stop to it. It is not those only who were interested in ravaging and plundering those countries that are guilty, but I fear that the great bulk of our people, not excepting ministers of religion, have actively or passively sanctioned it. . . . . Had we acted on Christian principles in our government of India, even though we obtained much of it by robbery, the present state of things would not have existed, and yet the advocates of war are ready enough to ask the Friends of Peace how *they* would now get out of a position in which they would never have placed themselves. I never saw more clearly the importance of the existence of a Society like ours (the Society of Friends), upholding the full principles of peace, and I cannot help regretting its rapid decrease.'

Mr. Sturge, however, was not a man to be content with lamenting past evils. As usual, he began to ask the question, *What can be done?* He wholly disbelieved the theory that the outbreak in India was a mere wanton display of ingratitude towards a benign and paternal Government. He had examined the question for himself, and he knew that the natives of that country had ample ground for complaints, however much he deplored the means they had taken of attempting to redress their own wrongs. But the form in which the matter presented

itself to the mind of Mr. Sturge was this: Would it not be right and wise to institute an enquiry into the grievances of the people? Would it not tend to allay the violence of their hostility if they knew that there were Englishmen who, while utterly execrating the frantic excesses into which they had plunged, had nevertheless so much sense of justice and sympathy with their wrongs, as to be anxious to ascertain from themselves what it was they complained of, and how their condition might be bettered? He thought, moreover, that the English people, roused for the moment at least out of the criminal apathy with which it had been their wont to turn aside from all Indian questions, might be disposed now to listen with some interest to the results of an honest investigation, conducted on the spot, into matters connected with the well-being of a hundred millions of their fellow-subjects, and the future prosperity of their great Indian Empire. His desire was, therefore, that some sort of voluntary commission should go out to India, consisting of a person or persons who should be so introduced to the natives as to command their confidence and elicit from them a full statement of the grounds of their disaffection. It was suggested that probably the Government might be induced to appoint a Royal Commission, after the suppression of the mutiny, to undertake such a work as he contemplated. But this did not at all meet his views. He knew from his West India experience that official investigations were seldom to be trusted—that to get access really to the *people* and such among the European settlers as were the people's friends, those who made the enquiry should be free from all suspicion of bearing any official character. Writing to the biographer on this subject, February 2, 1858, he says:—

'I would just say, that with the strong probability that a Royal Commission would not be formed of the right men, and the great evils of unavoidable delay even if it were, I doubt very much if this would be a wise course, even if it could be obtained. The evils of the present system are admitted by all but those who are blinded by self-interest, and the dreadful injustice to the natives is palpable to the mind of every honest man who has looked at a tithe of the evidence now in our possession; and if it be possible properly to govern India in future, I doubt if there were ever a better opportunity than there is now that the old system is broken up, to introduce better methods of government, or at least to make the arrangements for doing so in a way that should convince the natives we wish to do them justice.'

Mr. Sturge had often before been in communication with Mr. John Dickinson of the India Reform Association, a gentleman whose knowledge of all Indian questions is unrivalled, and whose long and unselfish devotion to the interests of the natives and to the cause of good government in that country none more cordially admired than he did. He now signified to Mr. Dickinson that if he knew and could recommend any individual suitable and prepared to go, and do the work he desired to have done, he would make himself responsible for all the expenses of the mission. After considerable enquiry, however, none such appeared to present himself. He then applied to one or two of his own friends in whose judgment and general competency he had great confidence, in the hope that they might be persuaded to undertake the duty. Having failed also in this direction, he determined to go to India himself, if he could secure the help of a colleague of like convictions and sympathies with himself. Towards the end of 1857 the writer of this biography was on the eve of escaping from London for a few days into the country, to seek a little rest after

rather exhausting labour, when he received the following communication from Mr. Sturge :—

'I am very sorry to delay thy visit to thy brother, but I want to see thee on a matter of so much importance, that I must beg thee not to leave until Saturday morning. I hope to get to Broad Street by one o'clock on Friday, but I shall probably wish thee to go with me and call upon one or two other persons.'

At this interview he repeated the 'strong concern' he felt (to use his own significant Quaker phrase) as to the condition of India, and his duty to try to do something that might help to secure to the oppressed natives such treatment for the future as might make some amends for the past. He dwelt with most unaffected humility upon the consciousness he felt of his own inadequacy for such an enterprise, but nevertheless expressed his firm resolve, since no one else seemed ready to undertake it, to do the best he could, if the writer felt justified in joining him in the mission. He added that we might induce one or two other friends to associate themselves with us. There was so much of noble self-devotion in the proposal, and so much of religious earnestness in the spirit in which it was made, that the writer did not dare to refuse. After taking some time to consider, therefore, he signified to his honoured friend his determination not to fail him on such an occasion. He ventured, however, to suggest some of the difficulties that might stand in the way of a satisfactory accomplishment of the proposed mission at that particular time. In reply to this Mr. Sturge wrote :—

'I have endeavoured to weigh, as well as I can, the objections and the difficulties of a deputation such as thou and I, and one or two others, going out to India. And though no

doubt the obstacles are great in the way of obtaining complete information, yet a few persons like —— on the spot might greatly help us. Even if we were unable to travel in some parts of the country, yet information obtained, were it only at second-hand, from those who had been witnesses of the evils they describe, if properly attested and coming through persons of veracity who had gone out with no other purpose than to promote the happiness of India by its future good government, would, while the attention of the public is alive to the subject, be received, I expect, with nearly as much interest as though the parties had been to the particular localities and seen for themselves. . . . . I should like to know from John Dickinson how far he thinks persons residing at the capitals of the Presidencies would be willing to communicate to persons recommended to their confidence the facts relating to the past grievances of the people, and whether the natives themselves, or the most enlightened of them, could offer any suggestions as to how these grievances could be most effectually remedied for the future.'

He had prepared a programme of the work which he thought the deputation ought to attempt to do. It lies before us now in his own handwriting.

'The following are some of the objects in which it is thought a suitable deputation to India might be useful:

'To afford to the natives an opportunity of fully and freely communicating their grievances, and to try to ascertain from them in what way they could be redressed and prevented in future.

'To ascertain, as far as practicable, both from natives and those Europeans who sincerely desire the welfare of India, what course of policy on the part of England would be most likely to promote the future prosperity and happiness of the native population, and to secure their attachment to this country.

'To examine into the whole circumstances connected with the cultivation of, and trade in, Opium.

'To ascertain what are the obstacles to the cultivation and export of sugar of a quality and at a price which shall supersede the slave-grown produce of the Western world, and how they may best be increased.

'To establish a permanent association in India to report to friends of India in England anything requiring redress or attention.

'To bring home one or more natives, if it is found desirable to do so, who shall be capable of informing the people of England respecting the grievances of India, and how they may be remedied.'

Thus, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, with his health greatly enfeebled, and conscious, as we shall presently see, of his own approaching dissolution, was he prepared to leave the home that was so dear to him, to brave the dangers of climate, and all the horrors and hazards of that time of anarchy and war, with no expectation of gain or glory, but moved solely by sympathy for the wrongs of the poor natives of India, and a patriotic concern for the true honour of England. His designs, indeed, were not accomplished. After frequent and earnest consultation with gentlemen intimately conversant with India, it was felt that the disturbed state of the country, and the extreme terror and jealousy which had taken possession of the native mind, would have rendered it impossible, at that time, to conduct such an enquiry as Mr. Sturge contemplated with any satisfactory result. But surely we may well believe that the Great Master must have pronounced over His faithful servant's unselfish purpose—'Thou did'st well that it was in thine heart.'

About the end of 1858 and the beginning of 1859, Mr. Sturge performed the last public duty in which he was engaged as a citizen of Birmingham. It related to a subject that we have no doubt was sufficiently dis-

tasteful to him; but, as he felt it *was* a duty, he dared not and did not shrink from it, at whatever sacrifice of feeling to himself. About that time great efforts were being made to move the Chambers of Commerce in different parts of the kingdom to petition parliament and to memorialise her Majesty's ministers in reference to Sir James Brooke and his territory of Sarawak, urging the claims of the former to the favourable consideration of the Government, and praying that the latter, by purchase or protectorate, or some other means, might be brought more directly under the sovereignty of England. When a proposal of this nature was made in the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Sturge felt himself obliged strongly to resist it. He would, probably, at any time, have gravely doubted the wisdom of extending our territorial possessions in the East; but it seemed especially absurd to do so at the very moment when the bloody drama then being enacted on the peninsula of India was proving so signally how little able we were to govern satisfactorily those we had already acquired. But even if he had not felt that general objection, he would none the less have opposed this particular acquisition. It is hardly necessary to say that he had no personal animosity towards Sir James Brooke. Indeed it may be very confidently affirmed that he had no personal animosity towards any human being. But he had watched that gentleman's course with great attention, and some of his proceedings appeared to him to be of a character which rendered it very undesirable that the Government of this country should approve and virtually adopt them by an act of official recognition, such as that now pressed upon them by his friends. No doubt Mr. Sturge, like many others, had followed the early career of Mr. Brooke in the

Malayan Archipelago with no little interest; for it was understood that he was a professed philanthropist, whose object was not to advance the ends of personal interest or ambition, but to extend commerce, civilisation, and Christianity in those remote regions. But in process of time rumours reached this country that he was adopting what appeared to some persons very singular means for promoting such objects. First came an account of a frightful slaughter of the Dyaks, not because they had made any attack upon the settlement at Sarawak, but on the vague general charge of their being pirates. Then there came revelations tending to show that the mode by which Rajah Brooke had got possession of the province over which he claimed sovereignty was, to say the least, of a very questionable sort. Still later, indeed within two years of the time when the application of which we have spoken was being made to the Chambers of Commerce, there had been another terrible slaughter at Sarawak, though it had been previously represented as being in a state of perfect peace and contentment under the rule of its European Rajah. It was upon certain Chinese settlers in the province that destruction fell this time. What the nature of the quarrel was has never been made very clear; but there was no obscurity as to the extent and severity of the vengeance taken. These were the words of Sir James Brooke himself:—'Out of a population of 4,000 or 5,000, certainly not more than 2,000 have escaped; one-half of this number being composed of women and children.' Now, all this revolted Mr. Sturge's principles and feelings alike. He was one of those who did not believe in promoting philanthropy by fire and blood, or in reclaiming savages by adopting and exaggerating their own savage practices. Neither

had he any desire to see the buccaneering system of the seventeenth century, when private adventurers went forth waging war and conquering provinces on their own account, revived in the nineteenth. He, therefore, deemed it his duty to try to persuade his fellow-citizens of Birmingham not hastily to lend their sanction to acts and proceedings which were, to use the mildest phrase, of so equivocal a nature. It is not necessary here to enter into minute details of what took place on the occasion. Suffice it to say, that when the matter was first brought forward at the Chamber in the latter part of 1858, he succeeded in persuading its members, before entertaining the proposition of Rajah Brooke, to petition for a parliamentary enquiry. On a subsequent occasion, however, a sub-committee appointed to obtain information reported rather in favour of the proposition; but before the Chamber itself met to make its final decision, Mr. Sturge sent to all the members a paper prepared with great labour and care, giving copious extracts from Sir James Brooke's own published journals and letters, with a view to throw light on his doings and designs in the East. To this he prefixed the following address:—

'To the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce.

'I respectfully, but earnestly, ask the candid perusal of the accompanying statement by every member of the Chamber before they come to a decision on the question to be submitted to them on Tuesday evening next. I think it proves beyond a doubt, that if the Chamber gives its support to the claims of Sir James Brooke, they will sanction fillibusterism and piracy from the days of Pizarro in Peru to those of Walker in Nicaragua. The authorities are given in the statement, and I conceive the sub-committee would have reported differently had the whole evidence been before them.

'I have no personal feeling or interest in this matter, but about ten years ago I entered fully into the merits of the question. At that time more than 100,000*l.* was demanded and paid (from the taxation of this country), in a comparatively short period, as head or blood-money for the destruction of so-called pirates in the East. Of this sum 20,700*l.* was paid in reward for the murderous attack on the Dyaks, in 1849, at the instigation of Rajah Brooke; the victims on this occasion, it would appear, were without fire-arms. The efforts made at the time, in this country, did not prevent the payment of the money, but they happily produced a repeal of the disgraceful statute which authorised such payments to be made; a result which has been followed by the significant fact, that our ships of war appear to have destroyed no more (so-called) piratical vessels, or villages, in these seas, since the price of blood has been withdrawn.

'Having discharged my duty by placing this statement in the hands of the members of the Chamber, before giving it any further publication, I feel excused from taking a prominent part in its future discussion: but I consider that the terrible slaughter of the Chinese settlers in Sarawak, in 1857, affords additional ground for investigation, and that the Chamber should reiterate its former resolution in favour of parliamentary enquiry.

'Joseph Sturge.

'Birmingham: 2nd Month, 26th, 1859.'

The Chamber, however, decided to petition in favour of taking Sarawak under the protection of this country, which led to the retirement of Mr. Sturge and his brother from that body. But the Government of Lord Derby, when the matter was brought before them by a large deputation of Sir James Brooke's friends, peremptorily rejected the proposition.

One other fact we have to record, which shows how intent he was to the last on the subject of slavery and free labour. We have seen how, as a

matter both of individual conscience and of national duty, he earnestly advocated the exclusion of the sugars of Cuba from the British market. An avowed friend of free trade, he held the system of slavery and the slave trade in Cuba was subversive of its essential principles. That free labour in the long run was less costly than slavery was always his unhesitating conviction. With his usual readiness to give practical evidence of the sincerity of his views, about two years before his decease he purchased, at the request of a friend resident in one of the Leeward Islands, an old sugar estate. To reclaim such an estate, where, from want of employment and the long abandonment of all the duties of ownership, the negroes had become 'squatters' on the soil, with their previous habits of labour almost forgotten, was no easy task. It was with much pleasure and interest that he was watching the obstacles to the reorganisation of regular labour and the restoration of the estate gradually overcome, when the early death of Mr. Edward Bennett, the young but able manager, took place. His decease (when on a visit to a neighbouring island) threw a shade on Mr. Sturge's mind in connection with this experiment which the few remaining months of his life failed to efface. Mr. Bennett had gone from Birmingham, and quickly evinced a special qualification for the work. It may be supposed that the loss of one with such qualifications as manager, and soon after by the decease of Mr. Sturge, of *his* business experience and practical judgment, proved serious obstacles to the success of the experiment. The estate is, however, still maintained, and its cultivation is extending with promising results.

One of the things that afforded most pleasure to Mr. Sturge at the close of life was the return of Mr. Bright

as member for Birmingham in 1858. He rejoiced over that event not merely on account of his high esteem and admiration for Mr. Bright, but as a symptom that the nation was returning to a wiser and calmer temper now that the storm of the Russian war had subsided.

Writing to Mr. Tappan, Dec. 24, 1858, he says :—

'Thou would perhaps see by the newspapers that John Bright was my guest while here, when he made his two famous speeches, one on parliamentary reform and the other on our foreign policy. He appears completely restored to health and vigour, and I trust God will spare him and guide him on the right hand and on the left, both spiritually and physically, and make him an agent of great usefulness in His hands. To show the position he now holds in this country, thou must know that there were about forty reporters each day taking down his speeches : two of the papers had the whole sent them by electric telegraph, and two others (one of them the 'Times') had a special train to London, and the next day the speech would be read by millions. I believe the moral effect was very powerful. How fickle is public opinion, for this man was burnt in effigy by the rabble during the Russian war, at Manchester, and afterwards rejected by the majority of the electors, while the week before last he was received in that city by one of the largest and most influential meetings ever assembled there, with almost unbounded applause.'

CHAPTER XXVII.

CHARITY AT HOME.

Mr. Sturge's Reputation in his own Neighbourhood—Testimony of a Prisoner in Birmingham Gaol—Tenderness and Faithfulness in the Family Circle—The Peace and Love of his Home—Dr. George Wilson's Experience—As an Employer of Labour—His Interest in the Welfare of his Workmen and their Families—His thoughtful Kindness for them—Their Tribute to his Memory—His Sympathy with the Working Classes generally—His Anxiety to get them Places of Recreation—Address to his Fellow-Townsmen—Devotes a Field in Edgbaston to the People of Birmingham—His Reply to the Objections of some of the Residents—Hydropathic Establishment for the Poor—Moral Elevation of the Working Classes—Freehold Land Societies—Deep Interest in the Temperance Movement—Bands of Hope—Education.

It is a favourite sarcasm with a certain class of writers against those who interest themselves in the material or spiritual welfare of the remote races of mankind that they have no bowels of compassion for their own suffering countrymen, that to touch their sympathy a man must have a black or coloured skin. The charge, like most sweeping charges of that nature, is wholly unfounded. If the satirists only took the trouble to enquire, they would find that in almost every neighbourhood those who are most active in feeding the hungry and visiting the sick and caring for the education of our own poor, are the very Exeter-Hall men against whom they are so prone to level the shafts of their wit. If anyone doubts whether this was the case with Joseph Sturge, let him ask the question in Birmingham or Gloucester. What charity has not profited by his generous benefactions? What benevolent institution,

what scheme for the relief of the poor, for the succour of the wretched, for the reclaiming of the criminal, for the education of the people, for the advantage of the working classes, did not number him among its foremost promoters and supporters? A very touching proof of the estimation in which he was held in this respect in his own neighbourhood is mentioned in a letter written immediately after his death by the Rev. J. T. Burt, then chaplain of the Birmingham Gaol. 'On the day of his funeral,' says Mr. Burt, 'I had a remarkable testimony to the rare and unblemished public virtue of our departed friend. After I returned from the funeral to the gaol, I was visiting a few sick prisoners, and I mentioned to them the melancholy duty in which I had been engaged. One of them, an old inhabitant of the borough, who had once been better off, looked fixedly at me, repeated the words, "Joseph Sturge dead!" and added, after a pause, "then Birmingham has lost its *best friend.* Only think what he has done for the working men, or tried to do. He may have had his faults, but I never heard of one." Thus the gloom which hung over the town on that sad morning penetrated the walls of the borough gaol, and made even the heart of the prisoner more sad. It was an appropriate place for this tribute to be paid to his memory, for almost my last interview with him was to concert measures for the benefit of one class of prisoners, though not belonging to this gaol.'

We have headed this chapter 'Charity at Home,' and we may apply the expression to Joseph Sturge, using the word 'Home' in its dearest and innermost meaning. It is said that there have been philanthropists who, while devoting themselves with undoubted sincerity to the general interests of mankind, have been neverthe-

less cold, hard, stern in their own domestic circles. Mr. Sturge did not belong to this class. Nowhere did his benevolence beam forth more beautifully than around his own fireside. 'It hardly need be said,' says one who has the best right to testify to what he was at home, 'that he who was so generous to those afar off, was not generous merely, but thoughtfully considerate in all the minutiæ of social life to his own belongings. He cared for and cultivated the reciprocities of common everyday life, had household gatherings of near relatives, nephews and nieces, &c., and often contrived excursions for their enjoyment. Considering how late in life he became a father, it seemed almost extraordinary to observe the interest with which he entered into and planned for the pleasures of his little ones. It may be truly stated that he *delighted* in the happiness of children, not merely of his own "lambs," as he sometimes called them, but also of the children of the poor. Indeed, in tenderness and love he was an uncommon son, brother, husband, and father, and in these relations my belief is his example is most precious.' But he was far too conscientious to be blindly indulgent even to those most closely connected with him by ties of nature and affection. 'I want it to be clearly brought out,' says the same witness we have already quoted, 'that though *faithfulness* to his own relations sometimes cost him a hard struggle, yet God helped him in this respect. All people are not called upon to go hither and thither to promote peace on earth and good-will amongst men, but where is the family in this world in which the cultivation of the true spirit of tenderness and fidelity amongst its members would not be a blessing? I do believe God, who sees all hearts, blesses most in life those who are watchfully obedient to Him in their near relations; and if this example of him who is gone

could be made to tell in this direction in the homesteads of the world, what a fragrance of blessing may spread abroad and even descend to posterity.'

No one, indeed, could enter under his roof without feeling that he was enveloped in a singular degree in an atmosphere of peace and love, while the quiet cordiality of his welcome and his delicate attention to his guests proved how true a gentleman he was in his own house. We have already seen how strongly Mrs. Stowe confesses to have felt the charm of that influence. We have another testimony to the same effect in the experience of one who, from his own gentle and refined nature, was peculiarly susceptible of such impressions. In the memoirs of Dr. George Wilson, written by his sister, we are told that in 1839 he attended the meeting of the British Association at Birmingham.

'He had the good fortune,' continues the writer, 'to be introduced to the well-known philanthropist Mr. Joseph Sturge, and resided under his hospitable roof during his stay there. The recollections of this visit were always associated with pleasant thoughts of his host, "as amiable, gentle, and intelligent a man as I ever met." Mr. Sturge's kindly thoughtfulness for his guests, and the graceful manners of his family circle, left a peculiarly pleasant impression on George's mind. He could not fail to enjoy himself where all conspired to give pleasure. His joyous letters, written near the door of a conservatory, seem redolent of the rich and rare flowers beside him. So deep was the impression left by contact with Mr. Sturge, that his death in 1859 seemed the loss of a friend, though they had never met or held any intercourse in these intervening twenty years. The lines to his memory by Whittier gives George much pleasure by their beauty and their truthfulness.'

Next in the social circle to a man's own immediate family are his servants and dependents. We have given in the early part of this volume some idea of Mr. Sturge's

conduct as an employer of labour. We revert to it now for a moment for the sake mainly of introducing what we cannot but regard as an honourable and touching tribute to his character from the men themselves who were engaged in his service. But before doing so we must borrow a sentence or two more from the correspondent whose words we have twice cited before, and who speaks from having witnessed and sometimes shared in the work she describes :—

'Strongly did he recognise the *personal* responsibility of being an employer, and his visits at the houses of his work-people at Gloucester are no doubt in the lively recollection of those residing there. The diligence with which he settled down to calling upon them at their own homes, and the interest with which he entered into their trials and cares while doing so, are freshly before me. His sympathy on one of those occasions with a sick child in an uninviting cottage, remains with me as a beautiful exhibition of the Christian gentleness of his character. I cannot now tell what were the words he spoke to this suffering little one, but as he knelt at its side by the bed on which it lay, the exceeding tenderness of his nature seemed peculiarly developed to me, because all the outward attendances were such as must have made it something of an effort to like or even to bear the place.'

The biographer must also, in this connection, refer to one little fact which came quite incidentally before him while looking through a number of his letters to his family, and which appears to him to furnish a striking illustration of thoughtful kindness for those under his care. We have already narrated the occasion and circumstances of his visit to Russia. It is easy to understand how absorbed his mind must have been on the eve of his departure, with preparations for his journey and with the responsibility of the mission he had undertaken. Yet among his letters to his brother is one

written from London on the very day before he started for St. Petersburgh, suggesting that, as corn was at that time so dear, they should supply the men in their employ with the quantity of flour which their families required at a sum considerably below the market price. This suggestion was immediately acted upon, but the peculiar significance of the incident lies in the fact that this anxiety for the comfort of his workmen should have occupied his attention at *such* a moment. Need we wonder that those who were the objects of such constant generous solicitude came to regard him as a father rather than a master? After his death they presented an address to Mrs. Sturge, signed by fifty-eight of their number, honourable alike to them and to him, from which we cannot resist the temptation to subjoin a few extracts.

'Gloucester: May 27, 1859.

'Dear Madam,—We feel it to be a difficult and painful task that we undertake in offering a few words of sympathy and condolence in the very heavy affliction which has fallen upon you by the decease of your revered husband Mr. Joseph Sturge. While thousands, however, of others throughout the length and breadth of the land have in various ways expressed their grief on what is considered a national loss, could we remain silent?

'Our hearts are very full, and the sorrow we feel is shared by our wives and children.

'As an employer the late Mr. Joseph Sturge was much beloved by us, but we remember him also as a dear friend, who had our welfare ever at heart, which he sought to promote by many and repeated acts of personal kindness. It is not an exaggeration of language to say that he loved us with a father's fondness, and had a tender concern for our happiness both temporal and spiritual. His manly gravity, his refined and exalted piety, his benevolence of heart, were alike ever conspicuous in his intercourse with us. Although

it be a duty in all the dispensations of Providence to say, "Thy will be done," we cannot restrain our grief for the loss of the eminent departed, and at his being snatched from us and from the world in the vigour of his days and public usefulness. . . . .

'With our heartfelt prayers for you and yours,

'We beg to remain, dear Madam,

'Your humble Servants.'

But it was not merely for the well-being of the workmen in his own employ that Mr. Sturge concerned himself. The reference made by the poor prisoner in Birmingham Gaol to his interest in what ever concerned the welfare of the working classes generally, was well founded. How earnestly, and in the face of how much obloquy, he laboured to secure for them their political rights, has been already seen; but he was, if possible, yet more anxious for their material and moral improvement. In 1844 he took an active part in promoting the establishment in Birmingham of baths and wash-houses for the people, before the work was undertaken, as it was at a later date, by the Town Council. For several years before his death he was engaged in urging upon his fellow-citizens the duty of providing for the working classes parks or open spaces in the neighbourhood of the town, where they could enjoy pure air and innocent recreation. In December 1853, he issued an earnest address on this subject 'to the rate-payers of Birmingham,' entreating them to join with him in urging this matter on the attention of the Town Council.

'On no side of the town,' he says in this paper, 'is there a green field within a moderate distance, on which even a child can play or walk without being liable to a prosecution; and in this respect Birmingham is in a far worse position than

any other large town in the kingdom. When we have tens of thousands living in houses which have not even a back-door, can we wonder that the rising generation, with no opportunity of healthful recreation, should resort to those places of debauchery and vice which so greatly tend to fill our gaols? and permit me to remind you that the size of your own is still deemed inadequate, although we have recently expended upon it nearly 80,000*l*. The want of places of out-door recreation is universally admitted, and the best means of supplying that want have been anxiously considered. The opening of a Park at Sutton, as proposed by my friend Samuel Beale, was warmly approved, but from circumstances beyond the control of the people of Birmingham, it is likely to be indefinitely postponed, and the difficulty of procuring land in suitable situations is rapidly increasing. Under these circumstances a suggestion which was made some time ago has been revived, viz. that of inducing, if possible, some of the landed proprietors, whose property is contiguous to the town, to appropriate to the public use plots of land suitable for the purpose. Charles B. Adderley, M.P., has generously offered a portion of his estate for this important object, if others will do the same. There is reason to hope that his example will be followed by others, the value of whose property has been greatly increased by its vicinity to this large manufacturing town, and who feel that such property emphatically involves duties as well as rights.'

Nor was it by exhortation alone, but also by example, that he promoted this object. Soon after the date of the above address he bought the lease of a large field in Wheeley's Lane, Edgbaston, nearly opposite his own house, which he offered to place in the hands of the Corporation of Birmingham, rent free, during the remainder of the term for which he held it from Lord Calthorpe, to be used as a place of recreation, especially for the children of the town. But some of the inhabitants of that rather aristocratic suburb took alarm at

the proposal, as likely to prove an annoyance to them, and lead to a deterioration in the value of their property. A letter to that effect, signed by seventeen of them, was sent to Mr. Sturge; but when this became known, a memorial, signed by a much larger number of the residents in the same neighbourhood, was addressed to him, expressing their cordial admiration and gratitude for the act:—

'We desire,' said this document, after an allusion to his juvenile reformatory, of which we shall have presently to speak, 'to encourage you to persevere in your Christian and philanthropic endeavours to reclaim the hitherto neglected and outcast portion of our juvenile population, and in the accomplishment of your benevolent design, to increase the health and happiness of children whose parents have neither gardens for cultivation, nor fields for exercise, by providing for them a place where they can play in safety on the verdant turf, without being considered trespassers or intruders.'

To the remonstrants Mr. Sturge addressed a kind reply, assuring them that he had no wish to bring a nuisance into the neighbourhood, and showing that their apprehensions on that score were unfounded:—

'I assure you,' he said, 'that nothing can be further from my intention, and as some of you are my personal friends, I hope you will believe I am anxious not to give you any just cause of complaint. I have, however, long held the opinion that in no civilised, not to say Christian country, should the great bulk of the people be deprived of the opportunity of even walking upon a green field, as is the case with a large proportion of the population of this town; I believe this has contributed not a little to the demoralisation of many of the working classes.

'I need scarcely remind you that Birmingham forms, in this respect, a marked exception to any place of similar size in England, and that open spaces near cities, for the free admis-

sion of the public, are so far from deteriorating property, that not only the private residences of the nobility near London, but the royal palace itself opens upon them. On the Continent this is still more generally the case; even in Petersburgh, under the window of the private cabinet of the late Emperor of Russia, whom the people of England have been taught to consider the very embodiment of despotism and tyranny, I had myself an opportunity of seeing thousands of the people assemble for their amusement without restraint.

'I hope similar accommodation for the public will be found on all sides of the town; but I believe there is no other space of about eight acres which is equally accessible to children (who have literally no back-door to go out at, and to whom it is especially desirable to afford an opportunity for healthful exercise), the opening of which would affect so small a number of residents on the spot.

'About two-thirds of the field alluded to is bounded either by the canal or the public road, and the property on the opposite side of the latter is in my possession. It is only the extremity of the gardens of five houses, and some land not built upon, that constitute the remainder of the boundary. Under these circumstances, I consider it both a duty and a privilege to offer this land rent free for the remainder of my lease, of which about fourteen years is unexpired, to the Corporation, for the admission of children and young people, under proper regulations, and which, I am persuaded, will increase rather than lessen the value of the surrounding property.'

But as Lord Calthorpe's agent made some objection on similar grounds, the Corporation was obliged to decline accepting charge of the field, which they did no doubt reluctantly enough, and with a vote of thanks to Mr. Sturge 'for his liberal and philanthropic offer.' Firmness, however, was as much a feature in his character as benevolence. He therefore respectfully intimated to the gentleman in question that he was

resolved to persevere in his purpose, and to defend by law his right to do so if any attempt were made to dispute it. None, however, was made, and the field continues to this day a place of daily resort to numbers of the poor children of Birmingham, whose games and sports it was the pleasure of their generous benefactor to watch from his own garden on many a pleasant summer's eve. Since then both Lord Calthorpe and Mr. Adderley have followed his example by appropriating, in other parts of the neighbourhood of the town, much larger spaces of ground for the same object.

Attached to the field of which we have just spoken was a large house, which Mr. Sturge also turned to account for the benefit of his poorer brethren. About that time the system of hydropathy was beginning to attract great attention in this country, and within the circle of his own acquaintance he had known several cases in which its virtues had been tried with the happiest results. He determined, therefore, to adapt the house in question for a small hydropathic establishment for the use of those whose means did not admit of their going to Malvern or elsewhere. He had it completely fitted up with all the means and appliances for that purpose, and engaged the services of Dr. Johnson, an accomplished hydropathic practitioner then resident near Birmingham, to attend upon the patients. Those who were able paid a small sum, and those who were not able paid nothing. It was in operation for several years; until, indeed, the removal of Dr. Johnson to Malvern obliged him to discontinue it.

Mr. Sturge felt a deep anxiety for the moral elevation of the working-classes as well as their physical well-being. He was always ready to use any influence he may have acquired over them from his known sympathy

with their political rights, to urge upon them the cultivation of habits of sobriety and thrift. This led him strenuously to encourage freehold land societies and temperance societies. At a meeting of one of the former held at Birmingham in 1849, he said:—

'He hoped they would not suppose for a moment that some of those who had long held the opinion, that it was in man and not in property that the right to vote existed, would not raise their voice in wishing God speed to this movement. But when the secretary told him of the 19,000*l.* which had been subscribed, he had no doubt that 15,000*l.* of it was saved from the publichouse. He confessed this was to him an irresistible argument in favour of the movement, for, however some might differ as to its political advantages, yet the moral and social advantages of it were so great, that he wished to raise his humble voice heartily in its support, and to wish that everyone present might do all he could to get his rights by this means, and then never to forget that it was equally his duty to strive to extend those rights to every man in the kingdom. One of the reasons that discouraged him from assisting partial measures was, that some of those who got their rights in 1832 have been the very last to help their fellow-countrymen to obtain the same advantages.'

Of the large sacrifices he made in the cause of temperance we have already spoken. But all through life he continued the ardent friend of the same cause, giving liberally of his time, his means, and his personal exertions for its promotion. At a temperance meeting over which he presided at Exeter Hall, in January 1850, he said:—

'This was not the place to make any political allusions, but he might state that one of the dearest wishes of his heart was to live to see the day in which all his fellow-countrymen, irrespective of the possession of property, would enjoy equal political rights, because he believed it would greatly promote

their moral elevation; but there was a reform of far more importance than this within their reach—that of becoming a strictly temperate people, and he could hardly desire political equality without this; for if the windows of heaven were opened to pour out its blessings upon Britain until it was a Garden of Eden, an intemperate people would soon convert it into a desolate wilderness.'

With the same object he took a deep interest in what are called Bands of Hope—that is, associations of children and young people, who are pledged from early years to abstain from those drinking habits which are the source of such incalculable misery to the working-classes, and from the bondage of which, when once formed, adults find it, alas! so difficult to escape. It was his delight to gather these little people around him, and to regale them in his own grounds with tea and cake, to present them with little books suitable to their age, and to take them out, sometimes to the number of 3,000, on excursions to the country.

It is hardly necessary to observe that Joseph Sturge was a zealous and munificent friend of education. For many years he supported the British and Foreign School Society, until, as we have previously explained, it took a course which he could not approve, in connecting itself with the Government. He then joined the Voluntary School Association, to whose funds he generally contributed 100*l.* a-year, and whose interests he actively promoted in various ways. In his own town no appeal on behalf of the education of the poor was ever made to him in vain, and he often remarked that he never gave money with more satisfaction than for such purposes. 'The British School in Birmingham,' writes a friend to us, 'he watched over with unabated interest, and constantly attended its committees

to the last days of his life.' The children of this school have lost in him a most liberal friend. When any treat was proposed on their behalf, or money was required for the library or the school premises, Joseph Sturge's universal question was, 'How much will it cost?' and then immediately adding, 'I will give so much,' whatever the sum that might be suitable for the object.

The committee of the Gloucester Working Man's Institute, in a minute adopted at the time of his death, speaks of him as 'the largest contributor and principal mover in the establishment of that Institute.' The same thing, we believe, may be said of the Sailor's Home, in the same town. Indeed, if all that he did to encourage and support institutions of this nature could be brought together, it would supply a long list of benefactions extending over his whole life.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CHARITY AT HOME—CONTINUED.

Friends' Sunday Schools—Mr. Sturge's Agency in establishing them—Formation of 'Friends' First Day School Association'—Great Extension of the Birmingham School—Its happy Results—Mr. Sturge entertains the Teachers every Sunday—His wise Counsel and Encouragement—The Effect of the News of his Death on the Pupils—Unsectarian Spirit—Juvenile Crime—Mr. Sturge's Interest in the Subject—Brings Mr. John Ellis from London to make an Experiment—Its Success—Buys an Estate at Stoke for a Juvenile Reformatory—Correspondence with Sir John Pakington—Success ofthe Reformatory.

But there was one species of educational movement at Birmingham in which he bore so prominent a part, and which has been attended with such remarkable results, that we must explain it at some length, borrowing our materials chiefly from a communication supplied to us by Mr. William White, himself one of the instruments in the beneficent work he so well describes.

Although the Society of Friends have always been zealous promoters of secular education, it is only of late years, with few exceptions, that their attention has been drawn to the work of religious instruction in connection with Sabbath schools. 'The late Joseph Sturge,' says the author of the interesting volume called 'All Round the Wrekin,' 'did many a good work in his day, watching always for occasions of generous beneficence, and succouring with that kindness of heart which, so to speak, animates succour with a living spirit. In the year 1845 he was talking with a few young friends on

the deplorable scenes observable in large towns on Sunday mornings; unwashed Laziness lounging in narrow streets, troops of boys making mischief with trees, hedgerows, and fences, or playing at 'pitch and hustle,' in the outskirts, and expressed a regret that Sunday schools commonly turned their scholars adrift at the ripest age for folly and vice. Could not something be done to mitigate the evil? The question was not asked in vain; the young Friends present were willing to try. Thus began the 'Adult Sabbath School' of Birmingham, conducted by the younger members of the Society of Friends. Many objections were started at first by good men: as what *new* scheme of beneficence is ever begun without having to encounter objections from good men? But it has outlived all objections, and, from small beginnings, now numbers *upwards of one thousand scholars*, while the example given at Birmingham has spread widely among the Society in all parts of the country. Of the part which Mr. Sturge took in promoting this blessed work we must now permit the writer to speak in his own language. Nor can we persuade ourselves to abridge this most interesting and affecting narrative:—

'He was mainly instrumental,' says Mr. White, 'in the establishment of the large Adult Sabbath School at Birmingham. It was at his house that the first teachers' meetings were held, and the plans of usefulness laid, which have since been so eminently successful, and so greatly favoured with the Divine blessing. At the close of the year 1847, when the Birmingham School had been two years in operation, at the invitation of Joseph Sturge, a conference was convened in that town, for the purpose of interesting the Religious Society to which he belonged more largely in the Sabbath School work. A number of Friends were thus brought together from various parts of the kingdom, the result being

the establishment of the "Friends' First Day School Association," which has continued in successful operation ever since; chiefly by the instrumentality of members of the Society in Bristol, the Sabbath School work is now pretty nearly as widely extended amongst Friends as amongst other Christian bodies; and in *Adult* Sabbath Schools especially, they have been remarkably successful.

'It may be fairly said that no institution ever interested Joseph Sturge more completely than the Friends' "First Day School" at Birmingham. For a long time it was quite unique in some of its arrangements. The scholars meet the teachers on First day mornings at the early hour of half-past seven; and it is a cheering sight to see some hundreds of the working classes of both sexes assembling at such an hour for religious instruction.

'Joseph Sturge was preeminently the nursing father of this institution, in which many who were once drunken, ignorant, and depraved, have become sober and consistent Christian men and women. Habits of saving have been encouraged, which have greatly conduced to domestic comfort amongst a class too little in the enjoyment of it; and self-respect and kindred virtues in many a Birmingham workman's home, have taken the place of roughness and profanity. In assembling the school at such an early hour a difficulty arose; many of the young friends engaged as teachers were assistants or apprentices, and it was not easy for them to disturb the arrangements of the householders in which they resided, so as to obtain breakfast before school, and as the Friends' meeting commenced at ten, there was not sufficient time to get a meal at the conclusion of the school at half-past nine. Joseph Sturge, ever fertile in resources, and always "given to hospitality," soon got rid of the difficulty by offering to provide a breakfast for the teachers near the school premises, and this provision is still generously continued since his decease, by other members of his family. And while thus liberally providing for the material wants of the teachers, about every other First day, he himself was present at these seven o'clock breakfasts, always setting the example of punctuality, always

with a beaming smile of welcome for all; and especially a kindly word of encouragement and recognition to the youngest. On these occasions he commonly accompanied the teachers to the school-room, and commenced the business of the school by reading a chapter from the Bible.

'In the teachers' meetings he took a deep and lively interest, and whether held at his own house or not he constantly attended them. How he rejoiced when reports of success were made, and the work appeared to be progressing: how he endeavoured to stimulate those who were less successful as teachers than others, who were labouring under discouragement of any kind! In speaking of the duty devolving upon all who had themselves enjoyed the privileges of a religious education, of endeavouring to employ their talents for the temporal or spiritual good of others, he frequently said, "I believe the very youngest teacher may reasonably take encouragement to hope for the Divine blessing, although his calling at first may only be to teach a few poor children their A B C; and if this is done from love to our Master, the reward will not be withheld, and more may afterwards be committed to his keeping."

'Although the calls upon his time were incessant, he was always both ready and willing to attend any meeting of scholars in this school he loved so much. Tea and other social meetings are greatly in vogue with the scholars, in connection with various institutions which have grown out of the school. Joseph Sturge was always glad that such meetings should be made a means of moral and religious improvement, and on the invitation of a teacher or some of the scholars, he would spend a whole evening in listening to the experiences of many of the men from amongst those in whose character a change had taken place. On one occasion he had hastened from London, where in the morning he had formed part of a deputation to Lord Palmerston, on purpose to be present at one of these friendly gatherings, in which he remarked how much more congenial to his own feelings the conclusion of the day was, than the commencement.

'He highly appreciated the growing independence and

self-helpfulness of many of the scholars; regarding it as no small evidence of the benefit they had received in the school.

'Some of these scholars, from having derived good themselves, became desirous of doing good to others. In one case in particular, a young man seeing a number of poor ignorant children running about the streets on the Sabbath, and apparently uncared for, invited some of them into his own house, and in a simple way began to give them instruction, expending a little from his scanty means in buying two or three large-print Testaments and some elementary books. This little effort was successful; the number of children increased to such an extent that the cottage became too small, on which the worthy man obtained permission to use a dilapidated warehouse near at hand. After this little school had continued in operation for twelve months, the teacher, being at one of those tea meetings at which Joseph Sturge was also present, gave a little account of his labours. At the conclusion of the meeting he called the young man aside, and slipped two sovereigns into his hand, saying, "I am no teacher, but I can give a little money; I hope thou wilt be encouraged to persevere, and any time that a little help is needed, I shall be obliged if thou wilt let me know of it."

'The writer will never forget the last visit Joseph Sturge paid to Severn Street school only the Sabbath preceding his death. He was accompanied by a minister of the Society of Friends from a distant town, but who was engaged in religious service in Birmingham at that time. Joseph Sturge introduced his friend to the scholars as "one who had come in the love of the Gospel to visit his friends at Birmingham; and who, with similar feelings, had come to the school that morning, and who would probably have something to say to them after the usual chapter had been read." A very appropriate address followed, at the conclusion of which a solemn silence ensued, and which continued for a longer period than was customary on such occasions, teachers and scholars being apparently deeply impressed. Joseph Sturge remarked afterwards to a teacher on his way to meeting, that he could

hardly tell how it was that the silence held so long, but that he did not seem able to break it any sooner.

'On the following First day it devolved on the writer to read a chapter from the same desk where Joseph Sturge had so often, with loving accents and genial smile, read the Holy Book—during the week *he* had gone to his rest. His favourite chapter, Romans xii., was chosen, and a few remarks offered in connection with the sad loss teachers and scholars alike had sustained in the removal of one so "fruitful in good works," and in kindly counsel towards the institution he had done so much to rear and to support in efficient working. The tearful and subdued expression of countenance on the part of the scholars evinced how deeply they felt *their* loss, and many, many expressions of sorrow and regret fell from their lips that day. Such as these: "Ah, if ever there was a good man he was one!" "I shall never read or hear that chapter without thinking of Mr. Sturge!" "Well, we are sure if the Bible is true that *he* is safe!" "Birmingham and Severn Street Sabbath Schools will seem quite different places without Mr. Sturge!" "Mr. Sturge wasn't a bit proud—he used to make himself just one of *we*!" "Yes, and if anybody called at his house to ask for a little help for a scholar or a poor neighbour, he was just as kind as though we *was* his equals, and actually thanked us for asking him!" And then the tears would flow as another would say, "Ah, we shall never see his like *no more*!"'

But it was in no sectarian spirit that Mr. Sturge promoted this Friends' Sunday-school. It did, indeed, afford him singular pleasure to see the young people connected with his own denomination engage in a work which promised such admirable results; for he had long felt that in latter times too much of the spirit of Quietism had crept over a society which, in its earlier years, was remarkable for nothing more than the actively aggressive and missionary character of its labours. But he by no means restricted his interest and

encouragement to that school. In a resolution of the Birmingham Sunday-school Union adopted after his death, that body, while speaking of his universal world-wide benevolence, 'desires specially to have in remembrance the kindly sympathy and cooperation received from him for many years by this Union, by contributions to its schemes of usefulness, by presiding at some of its meetings, and by adding to all the weight of his own example in varied efforts to benefit the rising race.'

Nothing, indeed, can more strikingly show the largeness of his heart and the catholicity of his temper than the character of these tributes to his memory which flowed in upon the family from individuals and from bodies belonging to every class and sect without distinction.

No class of his fellow-men was excluded from the sympathies of Joseph Sturge. We have now to speak of what he did for the lowest class of all—the poor children who through orphanage or neglect had become the sweepings of the streets and gaols.

It was in the year 1851 that Joseph Sturge's attention was specially called to the subject of juvenile crime. A conference had been called in Birmingham to consider this question, before which many affecting details were laid, showing the extent of the evil and the means that had been taken elsewhere for its removal or mitigation. He was deeply touched with pity for the desolate condition of the wretched children whose story was there told—first abandoned to neglect which tempted them to crime, and then sent to prisons, where often, instead of being reformed, their criminal education was completed by contact with others worse than themselves. With characteristic decision he determined to make an effort to rescue some of these unfortunates. The name

of Mr. John Ellis had been often mentioned at the conference as having been actively and successfully engaged for ten years as teacher in a ragged school in London, and as employing convicted thieves in his trade as a shoemaker. Mr. Sturge immediately communicated with him and induced him to come down to Birmingham to superintend an experiment he was resolved to begin for the reformation of juvenile criminals. He took a house in Ryland Road, Edgbaston, fitted it up, and then went to Mr. Stephens, the superintendent of police, and said, 'Now, I want some of the very worst boys you have in Birmingham.' Both that gentleman and the governor of the gaol cheerfully cooperated with him. Sixteen of the most notorious offenders were chosen. Twelve months afterwards Mr. Adderley, who had taken the liveliest interest in the experiment, said at a meeting at Dee's Hotel—'Few weeks have passed without my visiting the school, and I may be supposed therefore to be capable of forming an opinion on the subject; and I have no hesitation in pronouncing it to have been most successful. Mr. Ellis had not a single failure from the time he commenced, although he had had under his care leaders of gangs of thieves—regular "gaol-birds"—whom the police almost resented being taken out of their hands.'

Encouraged by this auspicious commencement, Mr. Sturge next bought an estate at Stoke Prior, near Bromsgrove, in Worcestershire, about sixteen miles from Birmingham, which he devoted entirely to the work of juvenile reformation. There was a roomy farm-house with out-houses already in existence in the centre of the farm, to which he added largely by building school-rooms, dormitories, workshops, baths, &c., until at last accommodation was provided for

about sixty boys. There is a home provided for these poor outcasts, where they are not only well clothed and fed, but carefully educated, and trained to habits of industry by being taught trades or skilled agricultural labour. Above all, it was his desire that the institution should be pervaded by an atmosphere of Christian love, that these neglected children might, if possible, be won to Him who was not ashamed to be known as 'the friend of sinners.' All means are employed to encourage the boys to diligence and thrift, a certain portion of what they earn being laid aside as a small reserve fund, which is given to them when they depart from the institution. When their time has expired suitable situations are sought for them, and if they lose those situations and are again cast upon the world, they are still to look upon the Reformatory as their home, to which they can return for a while, until some other means are found for them of earning an honest living.

Mr. Sturge's intention was to continue the institution on the principle on which he had started it, of collecting, by information from the police, the worst specimens among the criminal class of children, and taking the management and responsibility upon himself, in conjunction with his brother Charles. And for this they had made ample provision.

But in course of time Mr. Perry, the Inspector of Prisons, Sir John Pakington, Lord Lyttelton, and other gentlemen connected with Worcestershire, who were deliberating as to the establishment of a County Reformatory School for young criminals, applied to him to enquire if it were possible to make some arrangement with him for the reception of the criminal boys of the county at his institution. They met him at Stoke to

confer on this point. Mr. Sturge, however, felt very reluctant to do anything which should have the effect of transforming what was the offspring of pure Christian compassion into a Government establishment, which might ultimately come under the control of a mere formal officialism. On the question of religion he was especially jealous. In selecting a superintendent for the Reformatory, he had been above all things anxious to secure a man of earnest Christian character. And having done so, his wish was, in order to encourage the *home-feeling* he desired to cultivate among the inmates, that he should be regarded as a sort of father by the boys, and nothing be done which might interfere with his influence. But, on the other hand, the gentlemen referred to thought that if by the acceptance of their proposal the institution was to assume something of a *county* character, 'some clergyman of the Church of England should,' in the words of Sir John Pakington, 'from time to time visit and instruct in religion those boys who are members of that church, or not members of any other denomination.' On this point the negotiation was broken off. But it was conducted on both sides in so admirable a spirit that we cannot resist the temptation of inserting here a part of the correspondence between Mr. Sturge and Sir John Pakington.

Mr. Sturge conveyed his decision in the following letter :—

'To SIR JOHN PAKINGTON, M.P., &c. &c.

'In accordance with my engagement, after the conversation with thyself, Lord Lyttelton, and the other gentlemen I had the pleasure of meeting at Stoke on the 13th inst., that I would state in writing if we could take any number of the youthful offenders that the magistrates of Worcestershire might wish to send, and if so, under what arrangements—

'I beg leave to say that on reconsidering the subject with an anxious desire to second your benevolent object my opinion is confirmed that we cannot, without endangering the whole success of an experiment to which we attach great importance, concede the right of interference even in religious teaching. If our superintendent is qualified for his office, we wish all the boys to regard him with the confidence, respect, and affection they would a kind and wise parent, and to have that reliance upon him in regard to their spiritual instruction to which such a parent is entitled.

'We have requested the inspector of prisons to send to us, as far as he can suitably select them, those who are orphans, or have no friends. Our object is to lead these poor outcasts (who are often more entitled to pity than condemnation) from vicious to virtuous habits, from idleness to industry, and above all, we should rejoice in their becoming true Christians. This we think most likely to be effected, under the Divine blessing, by the reading and inculcation of the doctrines of the New Testament without any sectarian bias, and by the circumspect conduct of those under whose care they are placed. If through a Saviour's love they should become members of His Church, we consider it of little importance to which section of it they may attach themselves when of an age to judge for themselves. In these views my brother and our superintendent unite, but we hardly expect they will be satisfactory to a majority of the magistrates of the County of Worcester. If, however, they should wish us to take some of the objects of their care without any interference with our management, we will endeavour to arrange to accommodate not exceeding ten the next six months.

'Thine sincerely and respectfully,

'Jos. Sturge.

'Birmingham: 11th Month, 15, 1855.'

'Westwood Park: November 18, 1855.

'My dear Sir,—At a meeting yesterday of the gentlemen desirous of establishing a Reformatory Institution for young criminals in this county, at which I had the honour of

presiding, I stated the substance of what passed between you and the sub-committee who met you at Stoke on Tuesday last, and I also read the letter of the 15th inst. with which you have since favoured me.

'I greatly hoped that a permanent arrangement might have been made for the reception of the criminal boys of this county at your institution, and as you said yourself, there was no difference of principle between you and the sub-committee to prevent it; but as, on subsequent reflection, you are disinclined to concede as a right or rule that which I have since heard Mr. Hancock himself at one time invited—viz. that some clergyman of the Church of England should from time to time visit and instruct in religion those boys who are members of that church, or not members of any new denomination—the gentlemen who met yesterday feel precluded from entering into any agreement of a permanent character.

'As some time, however, must elapse before any new arrangement for the benefit of the county in this respect can be completed, I shall recommend my brother magistrates in Quarter Sessions, or wherever else I may be acting with them, for the present to commit boys under the new law to your reformatory at Stoke.

'The gentlemen assembled yesterday concurred in this course, and I hope you will not object to it; if so, probably some communication with Mr. Perry may be necessary, which may be made either by you or by me, as you may prefer. What number we may wish to send it is not in my power to tell you.

'I must beg your permission to state before I conclude this letter how greatly and sincerely I respect the purity of motive and the truly Christian benevolence and charity which distinguished the whole of your communications to the sub-committee last Tuesday, and I have reason to believe that the gentlemen with me are equally impressed with these feelings.

'I hope and pray that you may live to see your generous efforts crowned with success, and I have the honour to remain, dear Sir, very faithfully and truly yours,

'JOHN S. PAKINGTON.

'Joseph Sturge, Esq.'

By degrees, however, the temporary arrangement suggested by Sir John Pakington in the above letter glided into a permanent one. The magistrates not only of Worcestershire, but of many other counties throughout England, commit boys that are brought before them to the reformatory at Stoke. The inmates are taken both to church and chapel on Sunday, while the domestic religious instruction is entrusted to the excellent superintendent, Mr. Hancock.

We shall have a very imperfect conception of the part which Mr. Sturge took in the establishment of this institution, if we imagine that it consisted only in a generous devotion of his money to the reclamation of these unfortunate boys. His whole heart was in the undertaking. Busy as his life was, he visited Stoke constantly, and would sometimes sleep on the premises, that he might have an opportunity of coming more closely into personal contact with the children. He would talk to them separately, enquire into each one's history, and by words of gentle warning and encouragement would seek to woo them from their aberrations into the paths of virtue and religion. He planned treats and railway excursions for them, on which he would accompany them himself. He would get his friends to visit them, and address to them words of kindly counsel and sympathy. In short, we believe we shall not be profaning the beautiful words spoken of his Divine Master if we apply them to him, and say that his object was to seek and to save those that were lost. Nor was he left without a rich recompence. Eighty per cent. of these poor outcasts, who but for his intervention might have ended a life of crime in the hulks or on the scaffold, become honest, useful members of society.

But there is another, and by far the most numerous class of Mr. Sturge's benefactions, of which nothing has been and little can be said here. We refer to his constant private charities, performed in a manner so quiet that their course could be traced only by their effects, as that of some noiseless stream is traced by the verdure and fruitfulness which clothe its banks. How many a widow's heart has he made to sing for joy! How many a poor struggler, stricken down in the battle of life, has he lifted up with gentle hand, and equipped afresh for the conflict! How many working-men and others, unable to make way amid the crowding competitions of this Old World, has he aided to emigrate to America and elsewhere, often, moreover, kindly commending them to friends of his own, like-minded with himself, who were thereby ready to take them by the hand on their arrival in their new country. Mr. Tappan's letters often refer to cases of this sort. Upon how many of his fellow-workers, in his various schemes of philanthropy, who were less favoured than himself in their worldly circumstances, has his bounty fallen as copiously and refreshingly, and also as gently, as the dew! How many a broken-down labourer in the field of Christian usefulness has been sustained by his sympathy and succoured by his generosity! Many instances of this nature have come to the knowledge of the biographer, while examining his letters and papers, but many more doubtless are known only to the grateful hearts who tasted his delicate kindness. A friend has furnished us with two examples which came quite incidentally to his knowledge, and which, as he truly observes, 'lie away from the beaten path of benevolence.'

'Within the circle of his friends was a decayed gentleman of a noble character, whose loss of fortune had seemed rather to increase his usefulness and activity in the service of the public. As age advanced, the *res angustæ* compelled some of the cherished members of his family to remove to Canada. Joseph Sturge called shortly before their departure, and with that simplicity and tenderness so peculiarly his own, placed a 50*l.* note in his friend's hand, with the simple remark, he "had been thinking it might be useful." The fact would never have been known if the old man had not himself spoken of it, and confessed with tears in his eyes that the gift was "most seasonable."

'A worthy tradesman whom Joseph Sturge greatly esteemed became ill of a chronic and painful malady. This was not a case of destitution such as would call forth ordinary sympathy and help, but Joseph Sturge's power of sympathy and thoughtfulness for others were more than ordinary. He pondered the case of his friend, saw that the appropriate remedial means were beyond the resources of the patient, and came to the conclusion that he must go, at his expense, to a hydropathic establishment at a distance. After months of treatment the patient returned in comparatively comfortable health, at a cost to his benefactor of sixty pounds.'

CHAPTER XXIX.

LAST SERVICE—DEATH AND FUNERAL.

Elected President of Peace Society in 1858—His Remarks on that Occasion—Anxiety to enlist the Young in the Cause of Peace—Visits the North with Mr. Smith and Mr. Richard—His touching Addresses during that Journey—Letter to Mr. Alexander—Attends Meeting of Voluntary School Association—Intended to take the Chair at Anniversary of the Peace Society—Retires to Rest in his usual Health on the 13th of May—Prayer at his Son's Bed-side—Rises at Six on the 14th—Attacked by a distressing Cough, and suddenly expires—The Funeral—Meeting for the Erection of a Memorial—Rev. J. A. James's Speech—The Inauguration of the Memorial—Mr. Bright's Speech.

But the end was now at hand. This long series of services in the cause of humanity was drawing to a close. The brave and generous heart that had beaten so loyally to the interests of righteousness and mercy on the earth was about to be stilled. But it happened to him as he could have wished—his life and his labours ended together. The Great Master had not assigned to him what often proves the most difficult of all forms of service, and might have been especially so to one of his ardent and active nature, that of those 'who only stand and wait.' He passed without even an interval of rest from his work to his reward. The end also was in beautiful harmony with his life and character. The last service in which he was engaged was in connection with that cause which was so dear to his heart, for which he had long 'both laboured and suffered

reproach,' the cause of peace on earth and good-will among men. In the year 1858, on the death of Mr. Charles Hindley, he was elected president of the Peace Society, and never was there an appointment the fitness of which was more instantly and unanimously recognised. In the report of what took place on that occasion, we are told that when the resolution of the meeting of members was passed and presented to him, 'Mr. Sturge, with considerable emotion, stated that it was from no affectation of humility, but from a sincere sense of his own incompetency, he must express his wish that the committee had selected some other person for this office. He thought especially, that it would have been better to have appointed some one who was not a member of the Society of Friends; but if his friends thought otherwise, he was willing to submit himself to their judgment. He was conscious of some failure in his own strength, and had been desirous to withdraw from public engagements. But certainly there was no cause to which he should better like to devote whatever of ability and energy remained to him, than to the cause of peace.'

It was obvious to those in close intercourse with him, that abundant as had been his labours in this cause for so many years, he felt that the new position in which he was placed entailed upon him additional obligations which he was prepared to take up with characteristic decision and thoroughness. And the direction which his activity took was significant and affecting. 'Joseph Sturge,' says Mr. Pumphrey, 'had for some time felt his strength failing, he was sensible that his sun was nearing the horizon, and that the shadows of evening were gathering around him. He looked on the vast field in which he had so long and earnestly laboured,

and saw that a goodly harvest was ripening for the garner, but where were the labourers? Not a few of his early associates had gone before him to their heavenly rest. Could he devote his remaining energies to better purpose than in the recruiting service? Himself about to lay aside his armour, could he more efficiently serve the cause, than by endeavouring to enlist his younger brethren in this bloodless warfare, and engage their sympathies and zeal for peace?'

His mind had, indeed, been much occupied for some time with the wish to press the claims of this question upon the young, especially among the members of his own Society. In pursuance of this object, in March 1859, he accompanied Mr. Edward Smith of Sheffield and the biographer to a series of meetings in the north of England, visiting Leeds, Ackworth, Wakefield, Rawden School, Bradford, York, Darlington, and Newcastle. He had then evidently some premonition of his approaching decease, for in pleading with his young friends present at those meetings, which he did with inexpressible earnestness and pathos, he signified his belief, on every occasion on which he spoke, that he was addressing them for the last time, and assured them that in the near prospect of his own departure, there was no remembrance of his life upon which he dwelt with more satisfaction, than on any humble services he had been permitted to render the cause of peace. Writing to Mr. G. W. Alexander on April 2, 1859, he refers to this journey. After speaking to his friend, who was at that time much interested in the cause of education, of two subscriptions, of 50*l.* and 30*l.* each, which he was willing to contribute towards that object in England and Jamaica, he adds:—'But the Temperance, Anti-slavery, and Peace cause I feel to have a

paramount claim upon me, especially the two latter, which have lost the support of some who used to be their most liberal helpers. Though from some affection of the heart I have very much lost the power of walking, except slowly and for a short distance, yet I had satisfaction lately in accompanying Edward Smith and Henry Richard on a little peace tour as far as Newcastle, to try to induce younger people to come forward in the cause, before all the older ones have died, and though many among the wealthy and their children stood aloof, yet we were encouraged by the number who were willing to come forward and help, whose pecuniary means were more limited.'

The biographer saw him but once after that journey. Being then Honorary Secretary of the Voluntary School Association, he had pressed Mr. Sturge to attend its annual meeting in London about the middle of May. With his wonted readiness to oblige and encourage, he kindly consented. The meeting was held at the Milton Club in Ludgate Hill. In a few simple words he expressed his unabated attachment to the cause of education, and ended by promising a subscription of 100*l.* for the year to the Society. At the close of the meeting he said to the writer, 'I want to speak to thee.' 'I will walk with you to your lodgings,' was the reply. 'I am afraid,' he answered, 'I must trouble thee to get me a cab, I can't walk owing to shortness of breath.' This remark struck with rather a chill on the heart of the hearer. The cab was accordingly procured, and we drove to his lodging near Finsbury Circus. He then spoke with great anxiety and feeling of a dear friend who was in considerable trouble, and of what he was doing to help him. These were the last words the writer ever heard from his lips, words of kindly

sympathy and meditated succour for others. To the last, 'on his tongue was the law of kindness.'

At this interview he had intimated his full expectation of being present at the annual meeting of the Peace Society on the 17th of May. All the arrangements had been made accordingly. His name was announced as chairman of the meeting in the advertisements and placards. But it had been ordained otherwise. Brief as the interval that had yet to elapse, before it had expired, he had been called into the region of perfect and eternal peace, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. On Friday the 13th of May he appeared quite as well as, if not better than, usual. After his little boy had retired to rest, he went, as was his frequent practice, to his chamber, and gave him counsel on various subjects to which he wished to turn his attention during his own absence in London. Before he left the room he prayed fervently beside the bed of his beloved child, closing with the petition for his family, that 'in heaven not one of them might be missing. On the morning of the 14th he had risen at his usual early hour, about six o'clock. He was soon attacked by a distressing fit of coughing, which, however, did not prevent his retiring, as was his wont, to an adjoining closet for the devotional reading of the Scriptures and prayer. He then called one of his little girls to prepare to join him in their customary ride on horseback before breakfast. But on returning to his room, with the cough unabated, he sat down on the foot of the bed and said to his wife, 'I am very ill.' The servants were called, and such remedies as were at hand were tried for his relief, but in vain. On the window being opened for air he knelt before it for some minutes, and in a few broken sentences offered up short ejaculatory

prayers. For a short time his bodily sufferings were severe, and he soon became unable to speak. He was lifted on to the bed, and the pain subsided into the faintness of death. His brothers, in the meanwhile, had been sent for. They came hastily, and soon after their arrival saw the form, indeed, and the face they loved so well, stretched on the couch before them, the passing spasm of agony having already given place to an expression of perfect, of 'heavenly serenity,' as the bystanders described it. 'But HE *was* not, for God took him.' The faithful servant had finished the work that had been given him to do. He was still standing with his loins girt and his lamp trimmed ready for further service if required. But on that early May morning, soon after the break of day, he had heard his Master's voice, saying 'Come up hither!' and he was gone. It was not so much death as a translation.

> 'He set, as sets the morning star, which goes
> Not down behind the darkened west, nor sinks
> Obscured amid the tempests of the sky,
> But melts away into the light of heaven.'

The news, which soon spread through the town, that 'Joseph Sturge was dead,' sounded like a knell over Birmingham that day, and saddened all hearts. High and low, rich and poor, men of all religious denominations and of every shade of political opinion, joined in lamentation over the loss which the community had sustained by the removal of one so universally honoured and beloved.

The interment took place on May 20. 'The Corporation of Birmingham,' says Mr. James, in his funeral sermon for his friend, 'had their offer been accepted, would have awarded to him a public funeral; and though the accustomed retiringness of his denomination

declined this mark of respect, it could not repress the spontaneous expressions of general esteem. The lengthened cortége—the closed shops—the crowded streets—the long procession of respectable men—the mixture of ministers and members of religion of all denominations—the seriousness or sorrow that sat on every countenance, which in mournful silence seemed to say, 'We have lost a benefactor'—the numerous sermons which from the pulpits of various denominations paid a tribute to his memory—all proclaimed the respect in which he was held, and which was in fact a public honour put not only upon the benefactor but upon philanthropy itself.'

We cannot better describe the scene on the day of the funeral than in the words of the leading journal of the town (the 'Birmingham Daily Post'), the most touching part of which was the way in which the working-people stood in crowds amid the pouring rain along the whole line of the procession, many with tears in their eyes, and all with deep sadness in their countenances:—

'The funeral of Mr. Sturge took place yesterday, and the scene was one which has certainly never been paralleled in Birmingham. It seems to be with the deceased philanthropist as with many in a more humble sphere. His value to the community is only fully appreciated when he is lost to it; for though honoured while he lived, few believed that his death could have evoked so profound an expression of sorrow, and such general tokens of reverence for his memory.

'The mournful cortége formed in Wheeley's Road about ten o'clock. It then consisted of a very plain hearse and upwards of thirty carriages, but as the procession moved towards the town it was joined by nearly as many more. At the corner of Frederick Street some 300 gentlemen, who had met at the Edgbaston Vestry Hall, formed in line, and walked in front, three abreast. They were headed by the Mayor, Sir

John Ratcliff, and the Rev. Dr. Miller, Rector of St. Martin's; and every class and body in the town was well represented. Justices of the peace, aldermen, councillors, clergy, dissenting ministers, &c., were all there to testify the universal esteem in which Mr. Sturge was held. There were also deputations from some of the bodies in which the deceased took a special interest, including the Anti-Slavery Committee, the Peace Committee, the Temperance Committee, the Band of Hope Union Committee (including representatives from nearly every band), the Alliance Committee, the Baptist Missionary Committee, the teachers of Severn Street Schools, &c. In the mourning coach immediately following the hearse were Mrs. Sturge and her young family, with Mr. Thomas Sturge, of Gloucester, the deceased's eldest brother; and in succeeding carriages were Mr. and Mrs. Charles Sturge, Mr. John Cropper, of Liverpool, Mr. and Mrs. Edmund Sturge, Mr. and Mrs. James Cadbury, of Banbury, Mr. Lewis J. Sturge, of the University of Cambridge, and numerous younger members of the various branches of the family. The other occupants of the long train of carriages included Mr. John Bright, M.P., Mr. Henry Pease, M.P., Mr. C. Gilpin, M.P., Mr. John Pease (Darlington), Mr. John Ellis (Leicester), Mr. Samuel Fox (Nottingham), Mr. Robert Foster (London), Mr. Henry Dickinson (Coalbrookdale), Mr. Samuel Bowly (Gloucester), Mr. T. F. Addison (Gloucester), Mr. Stanley Pumphrey (Worcester), Mr. Thomas Harvey (Leeds), Mr. G. W. Alexander (London), Mr. Henry Vincent (London), Mr. Henry Sterry (London), Rev. Henry Richard (London), Mr. Cyrus Clark (Street, Glastonbury), Mr. Henry Ashworth (Bolton), Mr. Henry Smithies (of the 'British Workman'), Mr. Thomas Pumphrey (Friends' School, Ackworth), Mr. L. A. Chamerovzow (Secretary British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society), Mr. Isaac Sharp (Middlesborough), Mr. J. B. Braithwaite (of London, barrister-at-law), and all the leading members of the Society of Friends in Birmingham and other towns. Amongst the local gentlemen we observed the Rev. John Angell James, the Rev. George Pettitt, the Rev. C. Vince, the Rev. J. J. Brown, the Rev. J. T. Burt, the Rev. T.

H. Morgan, the Rev. R. W. Dale, the Rev. E. Derrington, the Rev. J. Wilson, the Rev. John Hammond, the Rev. A. O'Neill, the Rev. W. Bevan (Wolverhampton), the Rev. J. Ponting (Potteries); William Middlemore, Esq., W. Mathews, Esq., Dr. Melson, Aldermen Lloyd, Manton, Hodgson, Hawkes, Baldwin, Palmer, Cutler, and Gameson; Mr. A. Ryland, Mr. George Edmonds, Mr. William Morgan, Dr. Fleming, &c.

'Though heavy showers of rain fell almost without intermission, yet the two miles of street traversed by the funeral train were lined on either side by patient crowds of people, the countenances of hundreds of whom showed that they had nearly as keen a sense of the loss sustained as if they had been Mr. Sturge's intimate friends. The sight was really a touching one, and must have raised in many a mind the question whether we have in Birmingham another man who could have evoked such a demonstration of sympathy and respect. Nearly all the tradesmen in Islington, Broad Street, Paradise Street, New Street, and Bull Street, put up their shutters, and suspended business while the cortége passed. It was nearly eleven o'clock ere the meeting-house in Bull Street was reached, though order on the route was admirably maintained by Chief Superintendent Stephens and a large body of police. Burials in the small grave-yard adjoining the meeting-house are confined, we believe, to the brick vaults now existing, and to the one belonging to the Sturge family the coffin was borne on its removal from the hearse. Mrs. Sturge, her son and daughters, and all the immediate male and female relatives, followed, and stood round the grave, amid a large assemblage of sympathising fellow-mourners, while a brief and appropriate prayer was offered by Mr. Sharp, of Middlesborough. This done, the coffin was slowly lowered into the vault, and nearly all present retired into the meeting-house, the galleries and spacious area of which were completely filled.'

A brief extract from the letter of a friend to whose communications this volume has been largely indebted, and which was written at the time, will give the reader

some impression of the religious service at the meeting-house, which closed the public solemnities of the day :—

'Most of the leading gentlemen of the town were present, the mayor, Dr. Miller (the rector), J. Angell James, &c. Very soon J. B. Braithwaite stood up and spoke briefly but beautifully on the humility which characterised our beloved friend. Though so abundant in works of charity and beneficence, he did not in the least trust in them, but placed his sole dependence for salvation on His Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whom he entirely and fervently loved. John Clark of Street followed. After him Joseph Thorp rose and preached a very impressive and eloquent sermon. Beginning with the solemnity of death, he said it was not a less solemn thing to live. This thought he enlarged upon and illustrated in a very striking manner. He seemed to bring the importance of the eternal state very near his audience, and appealed to them, if any were yet strangers to the hopes and privileges of the Gospel, to accept while yet the opportunity was afforded the free and full salvation offered through Jesus Christ, all of grace, free grace, "not of works lest any man should boast," and not of works, also, lest any poor creature, conscious of his undeservings and the poverty of his best performances, should utterly despair. In the course of his address he gave brief but full testimony to the character and labours of our departed friend. Thomas Pumphrey followed in his usual impressive manner. After a very solemn time of silence John Pease rose and said that his own spirit had been feeding on the declaration of our blessed Lord, "I am the true vine," and were it not placed by the Divine Spirit on the page of inspiration that "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit," it might seem presumption to suppose for a moment that any works of poor weak man could tend to the Divine glory. He expressed his full belief that our beloved friend was a living branch in the vine of life, and that he had brought forth much fruit to the glory of our heavenly Father. John Sharp offered prayer,

closing with the petition, in allusion to the war on the Continent, that it might please our gracious Father to cause the wrath of men to praise Him, and that the remainder of that wrath might be restrained. It would be generally felt, I believe, that it had been a very solemn time. One gentleman, not a Friend, told me he was disappointed so little was said in eulogy of Joseph Sturge, but this I think was quite unnecessary. The gathering itself in all its features was a far more eloquent tribute than any words could have been. His own humble spirit would have rejoiced that so great an opportunity should have been seized, not to exalt the creature, but to endeavour to win souls to Christ.'

It was indeed an instructive spectacle which Birmingham presented that day, when the whole town, the seat of the largest manufacture of small fire-arms in the world, bowed in reverence over the bier of Joseph Sturge, the man of peace. It was a tribute paid, not to rank, or station, or learning, or eloquence, for he had none of these, but to virtue alone. It is to the honour of the people of, what Mr. Whittier truly calls 'the city of his love,' that they did not wait until he was dead to find out that a great man and a prophet had been among them. From a very early period they had recognised the rare excellence and worth of the fellow-citizen whom Providence had sent to dwell in their midst. Generally they were the foremost to sustain him in his enterprises of philanthropy and progress; they revered his character and were proud of his fame. Except during the brief madness of the Russian war, they never ceased to follow him with their confidence and affection. And it was surely also a signal testimony to the genuineness of the man, to the transparent integrity of his character that, of all places in the kingdom, he was held in most esteem by those who were the daily witnesses of his life.

Nor were his fellow-citizens willing that his memory should fade from the town which his virtues had helped to render illustrious. On the following August a meeting was held at the Town Hall 'of those favourable to the promotion of a memorial of the late Mr. Joseph Sturge.' The chair was taken by Sir John Ratcliff, the mayor, supported by W. Middlemore, Esq., Aldermen Lloyd, Manton, Hodgson, and Palmer, Revs. G. Pettitt, J. A. James, C. Vince, R. Hall, and A. O'Neil, Messrs. H. Bolton, G. Edmonds, Brooke Smith, J. S. Wright, W. R. Hughes, J. A. Cooper, W. Jeff, &c.

Letters were read from Lord Brougham, Messrs. Cobden, M.P., Bright, M.P, Chance, Green, Sir James Watts, &c., apologising for their inability to attend, and expressing cordial sympathy with the object of the meeting. The following was Mr. Bright's letter:—

'Rochdale: August 19, 1859.

'My dear Sir,—I am sorry that an engagement which I cannot well get rid of will prevent my being with you at the interesting meeting you are to hold on the 24th inst. I am not generally in favour of statues or monuments erected to the memory of the departed; but in the case now before us, I shall gladly support any plan that is likely to aid in keeping before the eye and the mind of the people the noble character and the eminent services of our lamented friend Joseph Sturge. To me his life, so far as I was acquainted with it, was a great lesson. I knew him most intimately in the last years of his life, when there was about him a ripeness of goodness which is rarely seen among men. In looking back to him—in recalling that which was striking in his conversation, his temper, his habits of thought, and his actions, I often say to myself—"What a glorious man he was! what courage and what meekness! what benevolence in action and what charity in thought! what a charming unselfishness, and what a following of that highest example afforded to us in the New

Testament history." I hope if you succeed in raising any memorial of our departed friend, it may serve as a stimulus to all who see it and know its origin, and that it may increase amongst us a feeling of reverence for that true nobleness which was so conspicuous in his character.

'I am, very sincerely yours,

'JOHN BRIGHT.

'Mr. Alderman Manton, Birmingham.'

The Mayor afterwards moved, that this meeting, 'acknowledging the claims of the late Mr. Sturge to the grateful recollection of his fellow-countrymen, cordially approves of the proposal to raise a memorial of his eminent public virtues.' This was seconded by the Rev. J. A. James, in a speech so beautiful that we cannot forbear citing it here:—

'The Rev. J. A. James seconded the proposition, observing that he did so with much pleasure. As one whose happiness it was for many years to enjoy a somewhat intimate acquaintance with the late Mr. Sturge, and as one who highly esteemed and loved him for the many virtues he possessed, he should ever have reproached himself if he had been absent from a meeting convened to do honour to his memory. "Honour to whom honour is due" was one of the injunctions of that sacred volume whose lessons it was his business continually to inculcate, and which he would exemplify in character and conduct as well as enforce by precept from the pulpit, and surely if any man was entitled to honour from those who knew him it was Joseph Sturge. The good man was gone beyond the reach of human praise, and therefore eulogy, however high, could not be charged as flattery, for the dead could not be flattered, nor would eulogy in the smallest degree endanger his humility or excite his vanity. He (Mr. James) believed from the knowledge he had of Mr. Sturge's character and conduct in life, that he had received the "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" from his Divine Saviour, and beyond that testimony of

approbation, could human praise reach him, it would be of little value. Mr. Sturge was a great and good man. His goodness in fact constituted his greatness, and in his (Mr. James's) opinion goodness was the highest scale of greatness. A man's moral nature was above his intellectual, and the intellectual sprang from the moral rather than the moral from the intellectual. Even God himself was greater in glory, from being the God of love, than from being the God of power; and they were most like God, and were the most blessed by Him who displayed that Christian benevolence and goodness, which were the prominent features in the character of Mr. Sturge. He was a Christian, a patriot, and a philanthropist. This was the most that could be said of him, and it was the least that *should* be said of them all. He had a noble mind, but a nobler heart; no man ever lived less for himself and more for the public good than did the friend whose loss they that day deplored. He considered philanthropy his vocation, and he walked worthy of his calling. Of few could it be said with greater propriety that "he went about doing good" like his Master than of Joseph Sturge. He traversed continents and oceans, he sacrificed ease and domestic comfort, and gave not merely his money but still nobler gifts which too few were ready to bestow —his time, his labour, and his influence in the cause of our common humanity. It was an honour to Birmingham that Mr. Sturge lived, laboured, and died in their midst, and it would be a dishonour to Birmingham if its people allowed such a man to depart from amongst them without some emphatic testimony to his excellence, some visible tribute to his memory, which should be an embodiment of their view of his excellence, and also an example for the benefit of others. To him (Mr. James) it was delightful to see men of all parties, politics, and creeds, and all classes of society rising above or sinking their differences in their eagerness to do honour to the memory of Mr. Sturge, all uniting in one harmonious expression of esteem and regard for the character of the man. In contemplating the object of that meeting, he (Mr. James) rose above Mr. Sturge.

He went from the philanthropist to his philanthropy. Why were they to pay respect to the memory of Mr. Sturge? Not because he was a brilliant genius, a profound philosopher, a learned scholar, or a distinguished statesman, but because of his Christian philanthropy. Not that he (Mr. James) did not respect all the other distinctions named, but the virtue he had mentioned had a more intimate connection than any one of them with the well-being of the community. As to the way in which they should express their regard for the memory of Mr. Sturge, he was comparatively indifferent. He should certainly on the whole prefer the erection of a public institution which would be the means of instructing the ignorant, reclaiming the vicious, feeding the hungry, or healing the sick. But he much doubted whether, with all their regard for Mr. Sturge, they should be able to secure means sufficient to carry out such an object. Then came the question of a public statue. What was the meaning of a statue? Not merely a decoration for the town, not merely a tribute of honour to the person who had departed from amongst them; the intention of a statue rose higher than this. It was to commend to public notice, and to hold up for public admiration, the virtues and the excellence of the individual to whom the statue was raised. Therefore it appeared to him that to carry out this object and to effect this purpose, visibility must be given to the memorial whatever it might be. There were statues in Birmingham raised to politicians. He had no objection to this, as in the category of politics must be included law, government, liberty, civilisation, commerce, and everything else that could bless humanity, and he was one to say if men had been eminent in life for promoting their country's welfare in this respect, let them have a statue by all means. Sir Robert Peel was a statesman, and Thomas Attwood led the van of Reform and enlarged what he (Mr. James) considered was the rightful suffrage of Englishmen. Let statues, then, be raised for such men, and let proper respect be paid to their memory; but why should they not in like manner

venerate and perpetuate piety and philanthropy? Howard had his statue in St. Paul's Cathedral, and Wilberforce had his in Westminster Abbey. Was it true, by the way (enquired Mr. James), as had been mentioned to him since he entered the room, that that day was the centenary of the birth of Wilberforce? If so, it was an extraordinary and delightful coincidence. Why should they not have a statue to Joseph Sturge in Birmingham? It was intended to commemorate his virtues. The Holy Scriptures told them "that the wisdom that cometh from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, without partiality and without hypocrisy, full of mercy and good fruits." Was not Joseph Sturge an exemplification of that beautiful language of Holy Writ? A statue would be emblematic of the wisdom that cometh from Heaven, that uttereth her voice in the streets, and crieth in the places of chief concourse, and speaketh of piety, temperance, and philanthropy. It would be a kind of open air preacher, which would not fear the envy nor jealousy of publicans, nor summonses from the police, nor the condemnations of the magistrates; but which would proclaim, if, on behalf of a mere man, he (Mr. James) might appropriate the language uttered by our Lord, "I have left you an example that ye should follow my steps." Whatever they might do, let them not rest satisfied with any visible external memorial of their esteemed friend. Let him have a statue in every mind and every heart. Let him be constantly before them as their pattern and example; let them in every case endeavour to imitate where they expressed commendation. Their departed friend had ascended to his eternal repose not indeed in a chariot of fire, but after a death so sudden and so easy as to be almost a translation; but he (Mr. James) would fain hope he had not carried his mantle to heaven, but left it on earth. Blessed and happy would be the man who should seek it and wear it, not only from respect for him who was gone, but for the glory of that God who was the source of all excellence, and its final rewarder in heaven.'

'The resolution having been adopted unanimously,

'Mr. Middlemore moved the appointment of a committee, consisting of a number of noblemen and gentlemen, to carry into effect such resolutions as should be agreed upon that day.

'The Rev. G. Pettitt seconded the motion, observing that he did so with much pleasure, and that he cordially endorsed the feeling and eloquent remarks they had heard from Mr. James.

'The motion was approved nem. con.

'Mr. George Edmonds said he attended on that occasion at some personal inconvenience, because he felt it to be his duty to show he was not insensible to the character and virtues of Mr. Sturge. He knew him intimately, and had seen him perform acts of benevolence which had only been known to three individuals, and in speaking of him, he felt that he was alluding to one who was infinitely superior to himself in every respect, a perfectly just man, and one who always appeared to have an exalted example in view, and the presence of his Creator ever before him in all he did. After a few further remarks, Mr. Edmonds moved that Lord Brougham be requested to accept the chairmanship of the committee, that Alderman Lloyd be appointed treasurer, and Messrs. J. A. Cooper and W. Jelf secretaries.

'The meeting was subsequently addressed by Dr. Birt Davies, Alderman Manton, Rev. Mr. Hall, and others.'

Ultimately it was decided that the memorial should be a statue and fountain. It was executed with admirable skill and beauty by Mr. Thomas, the sculptor of London.

It was inaugurated on June 4, 1862, in the presence of a very large assembly gathered around the spot where it was erected. We borrow from the 'Times' newspaper the following description of the statue and ceremony:—

'The statue has been erected on by far the best site in the

town; it is at one of the boundaries where the parishes of Birmingham and Edgbaston meet, the last being the parish in which Mr. Sturge resided. The monument consists of a central figure of Mr. Sturge, his right hand resting on a Bible, and the left extended towards a figure symbolical of Peace. A figure on the other side is typical of Charity. At the base of the statue, in front and back, are large basins for ornamental fountains, and at either side are drinking fountains. The principal figure is in Sicilian marble, the secondary groups in fine freestone. The likeness of the man is portrayed with wonderful fidelity. The expressions of benevolence which spoke so powerfully in life are depicted wonderfully in the stone. The allegorical figures, with their symbols, are also very cleverly executed.

'There was a large assembly to-day to witness the undraping of the statue. Mr. Bright and Mr. Scholefield, the borough members, were present, as were also the Mayor and many members of the corporation.

'Mr. Middlemore, the chairman of the Statue Committee, read the following formal address to the Mayor, dedicating the statue to the town:—

'"To his Worship the Mayor of the Borough of Birmingham.

'"Sir,—As chairman of the committee I have the duty imposed upon me of making over to you, as representing the Town Council, the statue of the late Mr. Joseph Sturge in trust for the public for ever. The statue has been erected to perpetuate the name and virtues of one who, though possessing none of the advantages of birth and position, and invested with no official dignity, made himself a name among the good men of all lands, by the purity of his life, and by the active and unostentatious exercise of a philanthropy that embraced all the helpless and suffering of our race. Of Mr. Sturge it may emphatically be said that 'he went about continually doing good.' Undeterred by ridicule, undaunted by physical difficulties, he endeavoured to avert a disastrous and resultless war. He was a distinguished actor in the

work of negro emancipation, in the reclamation of juvenile offenders, in the cause of education, and in numberless other ways he sought to heal the wounds that sin had made in the framework of society. While Birmingham has her memories of successful warriors and eminent statesmen, it seems right and fitting that the graces of benevolence and philanthropy, as embodied in the character of Mr. Sturge, should be held in honour. With this view the statue of Mr. Sturge, has been erected, and it is now entrusted to your care, in the fervent hope that the example of his beneficent life and this lasting recognition of his virtues may influence generations yet to come.

'"Signed on behalf of the Committee,

'"WILLIAM MIDDLEMORE, Chairman.

'"Birmingham: June 4."

'To which the Mayor replied in the following terms:—"On behalf of the contributors and the family of our departed friend, I thank you, your treasurer, the honorary secretaries, and the committee for the zeal and ability manifested in carrying to so successful a result the responsibility of providing a lasting memorial to departed worth. On behalf of the corporation and the town, I accept the noble gift, with its accompanying obligations. It was my privilege to know Joseph Sturge somewhat intimately. I can therefore with confidence endorse every word of commendation contained in your address. I never knew a man who appeared less selfish and more loving. He was a striking example of how true greatness may be attained, and how much one man might do by a consecrated life to relieve the sufferer and the oppressed. His generous nature knew no distinction between the different sections of God's great family. It was enough for him to know that help was needed to secure his aid. He was one of God's epistles to man, and though dead he yet speaketh. I trust that the beautiful memorial this day inaugurated may speak comfort to the bereaved widow and encouragement to the fatherless children, and stimulate many of the present and future generations to follow his example. We should

have been glad to have seen with us this day the genius that designed and almost completed the work of art before us; but, alas! before the finishing stroke was given his arm was paralysed by death, and, instead of receiving the thanks of the multitude now assembled, he speaks to us by this his last work, and from the grave, 'Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.'"'

Mr. Scholefield and Mr. Bright made appropriate and eloquent speeches on the occasion. The latter gentleman said:—

'I have not been accustomed to look upon statues and monuments to the honour of the living or in memory of the dead with much favour and appreciation. Generally, in this country, and I fear in other countries also, they have been raised rather to rank than to worth, rather to successful ambition than to true goodness, and more often to the destroyers than to the benefactors and saviours of mankind. But to-day there can be no doubt in the mind of any man—to-day we make no mistake—to-day it is worth we honour and not rank; it is true goodness and not successful ambition. We erect this statue to a benefactor and friend, and not to a destroyer of men. I shall not speak a history of our departed friend. I shall not indulge in any elaborate eulogy; but there are certain questions with which his name must be for a length of time—perhaps for ever—associated, to which I should like to advert.'

Mr. Bright then dwelt at some length upon his exertions in the Anti-slavery cause, in the cause of Peace, and on the question of the extension of the suffrage, and then concluded thus:—

'If I were speaking a history of our departed friend I might dwell upon his multitudinous acts of private benevolence. You know more of them than I know; but you and I together know very little of them. But the little only we know because his left hand scarcely knew what his

right hand did; but this we have faith to know, that his deeds of private benevolence are recorded on those everlasting tablets which preserve for ever the memory of the actions of a good man. I recollect well the last visit I paid to the house of Joseph Sturge. It was but a few days—a very few days—before his last day on earth. I went with him to his place of worship, and I sat near him. His countenance was in the line of my eye, and I observed it more than once. I remarked the gentleness and the purity and the peace that were expressed upon it. I felt that I was looking upon what I may describe as the countenance of "a just man made perfect." Well, we know all who are connected with the erection of this memorial have raised it to remind us of the character of this man, of his great courage, of his great meekness, of his benevolence in action, of his charity in thought. It is not needful that this statue should be here to remind this generation of him, or, as in the lines—

> "Why need we monuments supply
> To rescue that can never die?"

But it is raised for succeeding generations, that they may know that such a man dwelt here; that as he lived and as he moved so he was loved—so he was reverenced; and that in erecting this memorial we do it to stimulate future generations, and inspire them with sentiments of justice; to stimulate them to acts of mercy, and in the hope it may tend to raise up other men, who, in their generation, may confer on this great community an honour and a distinction as great as Birmingham now derives from the life and character of Joseph Sturge.'

CHAPTER XXX.

HIS CHARACTER.

Description of his Person—His Character founded on Religion—The Source of his Strength—Extract from Mr. Whittier—His Habit of early Rising and Meditation—Not ashamed of his Religion—Anecdotes illustrative of this—Sense of the Responsibility of Life—Fear of the Effects of increased Riches—His Liberality increasing with his Means—His Benevolence a matter of Principle—Extract from Mr. James's Funeral Sermon—The spontaneous Character of his Generosity—His Steadfastness—His Loyalty to Principle—His courage—His Energy—His Gentleness and Charity—His humble Estimate of himself—His Failings—Mr. Whittier's Poem on his Death.

In person Joseph Sturge was somewhat below the middle size, a square and strongly-built figure, capable of great labour and fatigue. In walking he had a kind of swing from side to side, which those who knew him will at once recognise as vividly associated with their image of the man, and which gave an air of good-humoured carelessness to his gait. His hair, originally dark, had become grey, and in some parts nearly white, with advancing age. His complexion was fresh and ruddy. His countenance was singularly expressive of the mingled firmness and gentleness for which his character was distinguished. It was observed by many that he had something of Napoleon's brow and forehead, broad rather than high. His eyebrows were remarkably large and bushy, underneath which, however, there beamed a benignant grey eye that wonderfully softened their austerity. There were times, indeed, when, as his eyes were cast down under those overshadowing eye-

brows, and his lips compressed in the act of writing or other exercise of deep thought, his face assumed an aspect of severity amounting almost to sternness, which revealed to the observer a glimpse of that strength of will which gave so much force to his character. But speak to him, and straightway his eyes, lips, and brow are lighted up with one of the sweetest smiles that ever irradiated a human countenance, and which, when contrasted with his previous mood, might remind one of a sudden burst of sunshine breaking over the face of a mountain tarn.

The foundation of Mr. Sturge's character must be sought in deep and devout religious earnestness. He was not a man to make any display of his religious emotions. But those who were admitted into his intimacy were at no loss to discover whence he derived strength for his long and strenuous labours in the service of mankind. It was because he held habitual communion with the eternal Fountain of life and power, that his own soul was replenished with a divine might which enabled him to stand unmoved amid the flowing and ebbing tide of circumstance and opinion. Mr. Whittier, who accompanied him during his American journey, remarks in a letter now before us, 'The great idea of duty seemed always with him. He used to remind me often of that line of Milton's, which describes his habit of life and labour

"As ever in the great Task-master's eye."

He made no parade of his devotional feelings and duties; he was free from everything like cant or affectation; but I have a most vivid recollection of seasons when the solemnity of silent prayer was upon his countenance as he sought, oftener than the morning, for

strength and wisdom to do in the right way the work which he believed his Divine Master required at his hands.'

It was his habit to rise early, and invariably to devote the first hours of the day to reading of the Scriptures, meditation, and prayer.

'In the retrospect of his life,' says his nearest earthly companion, 'I think no one practice remains more instructively before me than this habit by which he ensured moments of thoughtfulness before the day's press came on; and, considering what the day's press sometimes was to him, we cannot over-estimate the value of this life-long practice of taking the early freshness of each returning portion of the pilgrimage of life for looking to Him who is the source of all grace.' Very beautifully does Dr. Trench compare this to the act of watering a garden 'before the morn is hotly up,' which prevents all its green beauty from being wholly scorched by the sun, 'till evening and the evening dews return.'

> 'A blessing such as this our hearts might reap,
> The freshness of the garden they might share
> Through the long day, and heavenly freshness keep
> If, knowing how the day and the day's glare
> Must beat upon them, we would largely steep
> And water them betimes with dews of prayer.'

Thus was he engaged just before the pale messenger found him on the last morning of his life. On the table of the closet to which he had retired, as we have already described, his Bible was found open at the sixth chapter of the Hebrews. So that, probably, the last words on which his eye ever rested were these glorious ones:—'*Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in*

which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.'

It has been said that there was nothing ostentatious in Mr. Sturge's religion. We must, however, add, on the other hand, that he was as far as possible from being ashamed of his religion. The biographer had an opportunity, on more than one occasion, of witnessing rather striking illustrations of this. It was our friend's custom to assemble his family before breakfast to read to them a portion of Scripture, to be followed, after the manner of the Society of Friends, by a solemn pause for silent meditation and prayer. There was nothing in this simple form that could offend anyone's conscience. Nor was it ever omitted, whoever might be present. After the Peace Congress in Paris in 1849, several distinguished French gentlemen came over to England to give the Friends of Peace in this country an opportunity of reciprocating towards them the kind and cordial welcome with which they had been greeted in France. Among these visitors were M. Horace Say, M. Frederic Bastiat, M. Joseph Garnier, and others. They attended large public meetings called to receive them, in London, Birmingham, and Manchester. At Birmingham they were Mr. Sturge's guests. The biographer was there also, and knowing the habit of the household, he remembers wondering a little how their host would act in the presence of these foreign gentlemen. Many would probably have sought some excuse for omitting the customary form of domestic worship on that day.

But it made no difference whatever with Joseph Sturge. At the appointed hour all the members of the family came in, and he sat down quietly in his usual place, and opening the Bible, simply remarked, 'It is our custom to read a chapter from the Bible every morning, which I hope will not be disagreeable to our friends.' It was read accordingly, and was followed by the wonted pause for prayer. We observed that the strangers, far from being offended, were touched almost to tears by the simplicity and solemnity of the act.

On another occasion, when the Association for Social Science met at Birmingham, Mr. Sturge invited many of the leading members of that body, including Lord Brougham, Sir John Pakington, &c., to breakfast at his house. There were between forty and fifty persons present. Again, precisely the same thing occurred. Before beginning the morning meal, Mr. Sturge read to his learned and illustrious guests, with his usual simple earnestness of manner, one of his favourite chapters, 1 Cor. xiii., containing the apostle's memorable eulogy of charity, and then bending his head down, became for a few minutes evidently absorbed in silent prayer.

Joseph Sturge had a very deep sense of the responsibility of life. Life was regarded by him as a stewardship, his time, his talents, his influence, his wealth, as trusts received from above to be used for the honour of God and the good of his fellow-men. Hence the almost trembling apprehension with which he watched the growth of worldly prosperity with himself and his friends, lest the *love* of riches gaining upon them with the *increase* of riches, he and they should fail to make the right use of the gift committed to them by the Master. His letters abound with allusions to this point. 'I wish,' he says in writing to a friend, 'to be thy com-

panion in realising the danger of riches as represented by our Saviour—a danger which, I believe, increases with our years, while at the same time we may become more unconscious of the folly of embracing more closely our wealth as the time we can retain it lessens. May thou and I, my dear friend, through Divine grace, be protected from this great snare, and though entrusted with only this least of all talents, so use it that through a Saviour's love we may be admitted into His kingdom.' He endeavoured rigidly to act on these principles himself. He did not wait until riches increased before he began to give a portion of his substance to the service of God and man. 'Joseph Sturge,' said Mr. Samuel Bowly to a select circle of friends on the day of his funeral, 'was not always a rich man; he had known what it was to have small means, and to be under the strong necessity of economy in his expenditure. It was then that he began to give, and it was thus that the habit of true Christian liberality was formed.' We are told, indeed, by those who knew him well that in very straitened times, which came upon him more than once during his early struggles in business, he has been known to deny himself dinner that he might have something to give to the cause of charity. But what is perhaps rarer still, his liberality kept pace with the increase of his means. It would be impossible even if it did not savour of an ostentation most alien from his character to enumerate even his large pecuniary contributions to various benevolent objects, not only in this country, but we might almost say in all parts of the world. 'Most certainly,' says one who had the best means of knowing, 'up to the time when his family increased, he devoted more than half his entire income to charitable purposes, afterwards about one-third.'

To the same solemn sense of responsibility it was owing that he did not trust his charities to mere impulse. That he was naturally a man of very sensitive sympathies for all forms of suffering is undoubted. But, as Mr. James observed in his funeral sermon,

'His benevolence was the *philanthropy of principle*, as well as of feeling; the dictate of his judgment and conscience, as well as the impulse of his heart. He felt it at once his duty and his privilege to do good: a sense of duty gave sanctity to the privilege, and a feeling of privilege imparted pleasure to the duty. Nor was there anything capricious, whimsical, or eccentric in *his* beneficence. It was not with him, merely, as the matter struck him or interested his imagination. He had no exclusive softer seasons of the soul, at which times only he could be approached with hope of relief. He was not one of those fitful benefactors, of whom it is said you never know what to expect from them, profusion or parsimony; much or nothing; surly words or kind deeds. Nor was his beneficence that unsuspicious, credulous, and blind charity which suffers itself to be deceived by specious falsehood, and which is in fact a bonus upon imposture and an invitation to cheats. His well-known philanthropy exposed him incessantly to appeals from all quarters, till they became almost interruptive and annoying. But he bore all with patience and scrutinised every appeal with care, and was as conscientious in refusing to help a bad case as in assisting a good one. In this he acted with a due regard to the well-being of the community: for an indiscriminate benefactor, whose charity is blind or imbecile, is himself almost a pest to society, by multiplying other pests. And then Mr. Sturge's *manner* of doing good was as unostentatious as his benevolence was diffuse, yet cautious. It distilled as the dew, softly and silently. There was no *profession* of philanthropy —no Pharisaic sounding of the trumpet—no thirst of applause—no courting of attention. He went about doing good, clothed with humility and with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, and would have been as willing to do good

under an incognito, had it been possible or proper, as without a concealment. And yet there was a quiet power in his manner, which gave him influence over the mind of others who fell under the fascination of his gentle earnestness.'

It must be added that his generosity was frank and spontaneous as it was abundant. He was emphatically a cheerful giver. His gifts were not wrung from him by importunity, or a sense of emulation or shame. A letter we received from him a year or two prior to his death now lies before us. It was at a critical moment in the history of the Peace question. The biographer had written to Mr. Sturge expressing his conviction of the importance of certain operations in which the Society was then engaged, but fearing that the funds would not allow of their being continued. Here is the reply:—'With regard to the funds, I will remit my 100*l.* to H. Sterry as thou proposes, and though the whole expense of our operations here [which were then very extensive] are on my responsibility, I will hold thee harmless to the extent of 500*l.*, if we cannot raise it elsewhere, rather than our work should be stopped for want of funds.' Was not this a man to give courage and inspiration to all that were about him? Mr. James has said that he was 'not capricious in his benevolence.' He was not capricious in anything. He possessed what we should call a singularly healthy mind. There was nothing in the slightest degree moody, morbid, or fickle about him. There are men, and very good men too, with whom it is difficult and painful to co-operate, from deficiencies of temper. You have to study their moods, to humour their eccentricities of thought or feeling, to beware how you touch their too vigilant self-esteem, to watch your opportunity before you can get them to act, for, while sometimes ardent and enthusiastic, they

are at other times gloomy and irresolute. But not so with Joseph Sturge. He was blest with a most fresh, free, vigorous nature. You were sure of always finding him the same, always cheerful as the day, always firm of purpose, always generous and ready. Never was there a man more thoroughly reliable. You could count upon him as you could upon the ordinances of nature that are fixed by a divine law.

Another very marked feature in his character was his implicit loyalty to principle. He was less the slave of opinion, that tyrant of modern society, than any man we have ever known. When any cause or question came to seek his suffrage, he did not ask whether it was popular or in good repute, or like to prove successful, but whether it was true and right. There are excellent persons to be found who have just and generous impulses, but who are paralysed by the haunting shadow of their own reputation. Before you can induce them to take part in any movement, you must first be ready to answer satisfactorily such questions as these :— Have any of the rulers or respectabilities of their own circle believed on it? Who is to be, and who is not to be, there? They will give their money, and even their counsel and cooperation, in a private way; but they will not bring their own good name into any hazard. Joseph Sturge, on the other hand, was willing, like his Master, to make himself of no reputation rather than abandon a good cause. It was not to be supposed that he was altogether unconscious of, or insensible to, the high esteem and admiration which he had won by his long life of active beneficence. Nor can we doubt that it cost him pain to forfeit the good opinions of those around him. But when it was a question between right and reputation, we never saw him hesitate. If he was

only satisfied that he was called by his Master to do any work, however unpopular, he was willing 'to go forth unto Him without the camp bearing His reproach.' This of course implied the possession of courage of the highest sort, and in ample measure. We do not scruple to say that Joseph Sturge was one of the bravest men that ever lived. If he was a Peace man, it was from no constitutional timidity of body or mind. He did not want even that physical courage which is held in such esteem by many. During those stormy political times in Birmingham twenty years ago, of which we have spoken, he often went right into the heart of excited crowds, on the very eve of riot, and sometimes by his calm and friendly counsels succeeded in doing what the authority of the law and the terrors of the police failed to accomplish. But we speak of a higher kind of courage than that. He belonged to that class of brave men of whom the poet speaks—

> 'They are brave who know to speak
> For the fallen and the weak;
> They are brave who calmly choose
> Hatred, scoffing and abuse,
> Rather than in silence shrink
> From the truth they needs must think;
> They are brave who dare to be
> In the right with two or three.'

It was a courage resting on conscience, and sustained by a most firm and resolute will. 'When his mind was once made up,' says Mr. James, 'on a point of duty, he was resolved to go forward, though all the world frowned, or laughed in a chorus. If others would go with him, well. If not, he would go alone. In all matters of *duty* he had the courage of a hero and the constancy of a martyr. These are the men that bless the world, the men of determination that can breast the wave of

opposition, and encounter the storms of ignorance or reproach.'

All this imparted extraordinary force to his character, and that force was directed with steady purpose to promote the welfare of the world. His friend Mr. Lewis Tappan, in a letter to him acknowledging the receipt of his portrait, says, 'Just as I received it, I had been looking on the portrait of our General Scott, and on turning to yours, I could not help thinking, what a mercy *you* are not a general, otherwise with your energy who can tell what mischief you would do in the world.' Happily all the force and fervour of his character were employed not to destroy but to save and bless. 'He was equal,' says Mr. Cobden in a letter now before us, 'to any three men I have ever known in the performance of the highest duties of humanity. Doubtless he was naturally gifted with a rare energy which enabled him to accomplish what would have been beyond the strength of other men. But he did not spare himself. He taxed his power to the utmost.'

But with all this decision and energy there were united a humility, a modesty, a gentleness, and a charity towards others who differed from him, which are very rarely found in combination with such qualities. This was the peculiarity that most forcibly struck all who knew him. 'I wish,' says Mr. Whittier, 'it were in my power to write all I feel in respect to dear Joseph Sturge, and especially in connection with his visit to the United States. His narrative is very truthful and explicit in its details of his labours here; but it does not give an idea of the painful and very trying nature of his mission—the groundless suspicions, the coldness and unkindness of many, and the hard indifference and open opposition of others. Very thankful I often feel

that it was my privilege to be near him, to render him some little assistance and sympathy, and to witness from day to day his unselfish regard for others, his firm, unbroken hold upon principle, his patience, forbearance, and generous allowance for difference of opinion, habit, and education, his boundless charity and good-nature—all in connection and in peaceful accordance with a calm steady perseverance in what he believed to be right. I never knew a gentler man, nor a firmer one.'

To the same effect is the testimony of the Rev. Charles Vince in his funeral sermon. 'The "good man" was manifested,' he says, 'in our departed friend's gentleness of spirit and kindness of manner. This took away all that might seem ruggedness in his adherence to duty. In cultivating charity we are always in more or less danger of letting go truth, while the presence of firmness is often fatal to gentleness. It is very difficult to blend the two virtues of adherence to principle with charity and tenderness of heart. In this respect Joseph Sturge was eminently successful. Who that had only seen his sunny countenance and observed how he received the confidence of the little children that gathered around him, could have supposed that in him were united the strength of the Doric pillar and the beauty of the Ionic capital? Yet the truth is that he possessed a Christian courage which braved opposition and danger, combined with a gentleness that took the children even of strangers to his bosom.'

And finally, we cite on this point the words of Lord Brougham, who knew him in the midst of the hottest and most painful parts of the Anti-slavery struggle. At a meeting over which he presided soon after Joseph Sturge's death, his lordship, after referring to several of his old associates in the Anti-slavery cause then

gone, and especially dwelling on the eloquence of Wilberforce, added :—

'There was the silent eloquence of a good life in the history of Joseph Sturge; a silent eloquence by which he persuaded men to follow his example, and by which he always fortified and strengthened every good cause to which he devoted himself, and I know of none in which he was not a labourer. A sound judgment, a steady adhesion to his principles, and, when they differed from other men's, a tolerance of which I hardly ever saw the like; a perfect charity and even kindness towards those with whom he differed most —these were his characteristics; and the death of such a man is an irreparable loss.'

But the biographer has no purpose to represent him as a faultless character, though he is free to confess he was the nearest to that of any man whom he has known in life. But how far *he* was from feeling so himself, how constant was the struggle he had to maintain with the imperfections of his nature, how profound was his sense of his own demerits, may be seen by the spirit of deep debasement with which he ever prostrated himself before the face of Infinite Purity. A few months before his death, on February 15, 1859, he wrote to the Rev. Joseph Ketley of Demerara :—

'I wish I could more fully realise my personal interest in a Saviour's atoning sacrifice; and had a more lively faith to realise the things that are unseen and eternal.

'Sometimes I seem to have little more to rest upon than a deep sense of the depravity of my own heart, and my immeasurable distance from the Christian standard, which is the perfect pattern held up to us.

'It is better to feel and to know this, than to suppose that we have a single rag of our own righteousness to trust to, if it does not cast us down below hope; and this it need not, for we know the mission of Christ was not to save the

righteous, but sinners; and that none are so low as to be beyond the reach of His mercy, who is as boundless in love as He is in power.'

Knowing how strong our friend's own convictions were as to the duty of faithfully portraying the characters of the dead, we dare not withhold the shades from his.

We have been told that in the earlier part of his life the decision of character for which he was so remarkable was sometimes in danger of passing into something like a dogmatic wilfulness, which made him impatient of other men's opinions. Hence he was often called 'impracticable' by less bold and adventurous spirits than himself. But it is hard to say how far he was in fault even in this respect. It is very certain, at any rate, that some of the things in regard to which he was most confidently branded as impracticable he proved were *not* impracticable, simply by doing them. And whatever of this ungracious positiveness may have once existed had in his later years mellowed down into a most child-like tractableness. The writer has a vivid remembrance of one illustration of this when he was with him on a peace mission on the Continent. Mr. Sturge had written a letter to rather a high personage on a question to him of considerable importance, and then read it over to the biographer. The latter ventured rather hesitatingly to express a doubt as to the wisdom of sending it, assigning his reasons for that opinion. He reflected a moment, and then said, 'I believe thou art right; it shall not go.' Indeed, the writer is obliged to say that during the time he had intercourse with him, he never knew a man more amenable to reason, when urged by those whose judgment he respected, and on whose sympathies in his objects he thought he

could rely. This does not of course apply to questions of principle, for on them it was no more use trying to move him than to move the Alps. Still it is very conceivable, even to those who only knew him in his later days, that when in the full robust energy of his manhood there may have been something too much of the peremptoriness implied by the Napoleon brow. It is possible also that one of his noblest characteristics, of which we have already spoken—his obedience to duty irrespective of other men's judgments—may have sometimes been pushed to an extreme. 'I remember,' says one who knew him well and loved him dearly, 'I used to think that his independence of the opinions of others, his want of "the love of approbation," was such as almost to amount to a defect. He was more regardless of the opinion of the world than any man I ever knew. This would have been a dangerous feature of his character, if his standard of rectitude had not been of the highest. As it was, I think he sometimes needlessly exposed himself to misconstruction by this disregard of what would be said or thought of his proceedings.'

But perhaps the besetting infirmity of his nature was a certain impetuosity of temper, which betrayed him occasionally into the use of hasty and passionate expressions. It was hardly possible, indeed, that so much energy and fervour of character could exist apart from a rather ardent temperament. It will be remembered that he speaks of himself, in his school-boy days, as having a 'rather peppery' temper. And bravely as he struggled all through life to conquer it, it seems there were still occasional ebullitions of the old vehemence. At the worst, indeed,

> 'He carried anger as the flint bears fire,
> Which, much enforcéd, shows a hasty spark
> And straight is cold again.'

And when he had erred, or imagined he had erred in this respect, his penitence was profound, and the amends he made magnanimous. The Rev. J. H. Wilson, now Secretary of the Home Missionary Society, but who was once associated with Mr. Sturge in some of his labours at Birmingham, tells an anecdote which is beautifully illustrative of this. At one of the stormy political meetings which were often held in the town, in connection with the question of the suffrage, a working-man opposed some proposal of his with a pertinacity and passion which provoked Mr. Sturge to rebuke him, in words which no one else thought particularly harsh or offensive. Still, when the excitement was over, the remembrance of them grieved him deeply. The next morning he sent for Mr. Wilson, and said to him, 'James, thou must find out that working-man to whom I spoke last night, and bring him to me.' 'But I don't know his name, or where he lives,' was the reply. 'It doesn't signify,' answered he, 'he *must* be found; I have not slept all night for thinking of the words I said to him. I can't rest until I have apologised and asked his pardon.' The quest was made, and the man was found and brought to him, and he did apologise with a manly candour and humility that went straight to the poor fellow's heart. From that time he took the man by the hand, and befriended him for years.

It is also a noble testimony to the triumph of Christian principle over natural infirmity that he had so schooled and mastered his temper, that his apparently imperturbable calmness, amid very trying circumstances, was precisely the thing which struck all men as one of

his most characteristic qualities. 'The very gentlest of all human natures,' are the words of his American poet-friend, words which we have no doubt have been echoed by thousands who knew him, as most happily descriptive of what he was. And beyond doubt his *was* one of the gentlest of all human natures. And if it was so rather by divine grace than by original tendency, all the more are we bound to glorify the grace of God in him.

We have candidly told all the evil we knew of him. Happy are those who have no graver flaws in their character than these. His failings, such as they were, sprung from the conflict of qualities all of which were necessary to make him the admirable man he was, though occasionally one class may have pushed into undue ascendency over the others.

> 'But now he rests; his greatness and his sweetness
> No more shall seem at strife,
> And death has moulded into calm completeness
> The statue of his life.'

Such he was, and we fear 'we ne'er shall look upon his like again.' We bless heaven for the intimate friendship into which we were admitted with Joseph Sturge as one of the highest privileges of our existence. To know such a man was to think better of the whole human race. We feel still that when wearied with unsuccessful labour in the fields where he so long and bravely toiled, when cast down by disappointment or hope deferred, when in danger of being soured by the selfishness of some and the lukewarmness of others with whom we may be brought into contact, the memory of him we have lost—his strong faith, his Christian gentleness, his high courage, his unselfish dedication to the service of God and man—will come

to us with healing on its wings, soothe our irritation, and by his example, we hope, nerve our hearts to a patient continuance in well-doing irrespective of the world's frowns or smiles.

But perhaps the best delineation of Mr. Sturge's character is given in the following exquisite lines of Whittier entitled

IN REMEMBRANCE OF JOSEPH STURGE.

'In the fair land o'erwatched by Ischia's mountains,
Across the charmèd bay
Whose blue waves keep with Capri's silver fountains
Perpetual holiday,

A King lies dead; his wafer duly eaten,
His gold-bought masses given;
And Rome's great altar smokes with gums to sweeten
A name that stinks to heaven.

And while all Naples thrills with mute thanksgiving,
The court of England's Queen
For the dead monster, so abhorred while living,
In mourning garb is seen.

With a true sorrow God rebukes that feigning;
By lone Edgbaston's side
Stands a great city in the sky's sad raining,
Bare headed and wet eyed!

Silent for once the restless hive of labour,
Save the low funeral tread,
Or voice of craftsman whispering to his neighbour
The good deeds of the dead.

For him no minster's chant of the immortals
Rose from the lips of sin,
No mitred priest swung back the heavenly portals
To let the white soul in.

But age and sickness framed their tearful faces
In the low hovel's door,
And prayers went up from all the dark by-places
And Ghettos of the poor.

The pallid toiler and the negro chattel,
The vagrant of the street,
The human dice wherewith in games of battle
The lords of earth compete,

Touched with a grief that needs no outward draping,
All swelled the long lament
Of grateful hearts, instead of marble shaping
His viewless monument!

For never yet with ritual pomp and splendour,
In the long heretofore,
A heart more loyal, warm, and true, and tender,
Has England's turf closed o'er.

And if there fell from out her grand old steeples
No crash of brazen wail
The murmurous woe of kindreds, tongues, and peoples
Swept in on every gale.

It came from Holstein's birchen-belted meadows,
And from the tropic calms
Of Indian islands in the sun-smit shadows
Of occidental palms.

From the locked roadsteads of the Bothnian peasants
And harbours of the Finn,
Where war's worn victims saw his gentle presence
Come sailing, Christ-like, in.

To seek the lost, to build the old waste places,
To link the hostile shores
Of severing seas, and sow with England's daisies
The moss of Finland's moors.

Thanks for the good man's beautiful example,
Who in the vilest saw
Some sacred crypt or altar of a temple
Still vocal with God's law;

And heard with tender ear the spirit sighing
As from its prison cell,
Praying for pity, like the mournful crying
Of Jonah out of hell.

Not his the golden pen's or lip's persuasion,
But a fine sense of right,
And truth's directness, meeting each occasion
Straight as a line of light.

His faith and works, like streams that intermingle,
In the same channel ran;
The crystal clearness of an eye kept single
Shamed all the frauds of man.

The very gentlest of all human natures
He joined to courage strong,
And love outreaching unto all God's creatures
With sturdy hate of wrong.

Tender as a woman; manliness and meekness
In him were so allied
That they who judged him by his strength or weakness
Saw but a single side.

Men failed, betrayed him; but his zeal seemed nourished
By failure and by fall;
Still a larger faith in human kind he cherished,
And in God's love for all.

And now he rests: his greatness and his sweetness
No more shall seem at strife,
And death has moulded into calm completeness
The statue of his life.

Where the dews glisten and the song-birds warble
His dust to dust is laid,
In Nature's keeping, with no pomp of marble
To shame his modest shade.

The forges glow, the hammers all are ringing
Beneath its smoky veil,
Hard by the city of his love is swinging
Its clamorous iron flail.

But round his grave are quietude and beauty,
And the sweet heaven above—
The fitting symbol of a life of duty
Transfigured into love!'

APPENDIX.

—♦—

The following is the *official* reply of the Emperor of Russia to the Friends' deputation:—

'Sa Majesté l'Empereur a reçu l'Addresse présentée par la Députation de la Société des Amis avec une vive satisfaction, comme l'expression de sentiments entièrement conformes à ceux dont Il est animé lui-même. Sa Majesté a horreur comme eux de la guerre, et désire sincèrement le maintien de la paix. Pour y arriver Elle est prête à oublier insultes et offenses personnelles, à tendre le premier la main à Ses ennemis et à faire toutes les concessions compatibles avec l'honneur. Sa Majesté n'attaquera pas: Elle ne fera que se défendre, et sera toujours disposée à entendre des offres de paix.

'L'Empereur regrette vivement l'état actuel des choses, et Il en rejette loin de lui la responsabilité. Il a constamment désiré vivre en bonne entente avec l'Angleterre: Il a une sincère affection pour la Reine, qu'Il estime comme Souveraine, Femme, Épouse, et Mère; et Il Lui a donné des preuves non équivoques de confiance et d'égards. Sa Majesté répudie toute idée ambitieuse de conquête ou d'ingérence injuste dans les affaires de la Turquie: Elle n'y réclame que ce qu'Elle a le droit de demander en vertu des traités explicites conclus par Ses dévanciers et par elle-même. Le lien qui unit la Russie à ses co-religionnaires en Orient date d'il y a 900 ans; c'est de l'ancien Empire Grec que lui est venu le Christianisme, et depuis ce tems une communauté constante d'intérêts religieux a été maintenue entre la Russie et l'Empire

de Byzance jusqu'à sa chute. Débarrassée elle-même du joug des Tartares, la Russie s'est depuis ce tems constamment appliquée à améliorer le sort de ses co-religionnaires : elle y a travaillé avec succès. Elle ne saurait récuser ses sympathies religieuses pour eux et renoncer à une influence légitime acquise au prix de son sang. Mais l'Empereur ne veut rien au delà : Il n'en veut nullement aux Turcs : et Il serait heureux de voir l'Angleterre rendre meilleure justice au mobile qui a guidé ses actions. Il ne croit pas lui avoir jamais donné le moindre motif de plainte ; et Il en appelle au témoignage de tous les Anglais établis dans ce pays, qui n'hésiteront pas, Sa Majesté en est convaincue, à déclarer qu'ils n'ont eu toujours qu'à se louer de l'accueil qu'ils ont trouvé en Russie.

(Signed) 'Nesselrode.

'Pétersbourg, le $\frac{1}{13}$ Février 1854.'

Public Testimonies.

We had intended to have inserted here the addresses and resolutions adopted by various public bodies on the death of Mr. Sturge, and sent to his family, gratefully acknowledging his services and recording their sense of his eminent worth ; but as it would swell the volume to undue dimensions, we must be content with merely enumerating the principal of them :—

The Birmingham Town Council.
The Birmingham Anti-Slavery Society.
The Birmingham Baptist Missionary Society.
The Birmingham Sunday School Union.
The Committee of the Birmingham Town Mission.
The Missionaries of the Birmingham Town Mission.
The Birmingham Band of Hope.
The Teachers of Severn Street Sunday School.
The Adult Scholars of Severn Street Sunday School.
The Band of Hope Union.
From 1,200 children of the Birmingham Band of Hope.
The London Peace Society.
The American Peace Society.
The Liverpool Peace Society.

The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society.
The Newcastle and Gateshead Anti-Slavery Society.
The National Temperance League.
The Wolverhampton Temperance Society.
The North Staffordshire Temperance Association.
The Newport Temperance Society.
The Workmen in J. and C. Sturge's employment at Gloucester.
The Working Men's Institute at Gloucester, &c. &c.
From several congregations of negroes in the West Indies, &c. &c.

We must make an exception, however, in favour of the following as a sample of

NEGRO GRATITUDE.

'The accompanying address from free negroes in Jamaica, to the family of the late Joseph Sturge, will probably be read with interest by many.

'At a meeting of the Church and Congregations in Spanish Town and Sligoville, in the parishes of St. Catherine and St. Thomas-in-the-Vale, Jamaica, under the pastoral care of the Rev. J. M. Phillippo, it was unanimously resolved,—

'"That this meeting has heard with deep sorrow the death of their devoted friend and benefactor, Joseph Sturge, Esq., and hereby express their heartfelt sympathy with the friends of religion, of justice, and of humanity at large, in that affecting Providence by which they have been called to sustain the loss of so distinguished a Christian and philanthropist.

'"They more especially express their condolence with Mrs. Sturge and family, who under such painful circumstances, in relation to the suddenness of the bereavement, mourn the loss of so affectionate and devoted a husband, father, and friend. But while they so deeply deplore his loss, and record their testimony to the great and varied excellences of Mr. Sturge's character in the relationships both of public and private life, as connected more immediately with the interests of his native land, this meeting, consisting chiefly of emancipated peasantry, cannot but feel

themselves laid under the deepest obligations on account of his long, arduous, and unwavering advocacy of their rights as men and as British subjects, particularly for his noble and generous conduct in personally visiting the West Indies in 1837 (well remembered by many of them), in order to acquaint himself with the odious system of apprenticeship to which they were then subject, and by which he was enabled to collect the facts that so effectually moved the people and Parliament of England to effect their complete emancipation.

'"This boon, which it need scarcely be said they estimate beyond all price, and for which they trust they are increasingly thankful, they attribute chiefly, under God, to the efforts of their departed friend and his associate, Thomas Harvey, Esq., and they are persuaded that in this testimony they speak the sentiments of the whole emancipated population, not only of Jamaica, but those of the enfranchised peoples of all the British colonies.

'"All feel that they are bereaved of a friend and benefactor, whose anxiety and efforts for their welfare have never been surpassed, and will ever associate the name of Sturge in their recollection with Clarkson, Wilberforce, Buxton, and others, gone also to their reward—the noblest and best friends of the African race that history records.

'"Mr. Sturge, however, not only occupied the highest rank as an abolitionist; while he endeavoured to free the body of the slave from degrading vassalage, he to the last hour of his life consecrated his influence and property towards raising him, by Christian education, to that rank in the scale of being, of which by his circumstances and condition he had been so unjustly deprived. But for his unfaltering generosity in this department of benevolence, (by no means the least important), and that of others of the Society of Friends in particular, in aiding the various educational establishments in Jamaica, as many of this meeting can testify, few would have emerged from the abject mental condition in which the dark reign of slavery left them.

'"In recording their expressions of grief, in common with

the whole of their brethren acquainted with Mr. Sturge's sympathies and efforts for the advancement of both their temporal and spiritual welfare, this meeting would not forget that the event was the result of His all-wise ordination, 'who doeth what pleaseth Him in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.'

'"They would, therefore, humbly acquiesce in the dispensation, and adore the divine goodness which supported their devoted friend through so long a period of usefulness, and enabled him to perform such a series of eminent services as distinguished his life, and earnestly pray that his children, and all who were privileged with his acquaintance, together with all who may hereafter know his worth, may imitate him in all that ennobled and distinguished him as a philanthropist, and in everything that was amiable and attractive in his character as a Christian.

'"On behalf of the Church and Congregations.

(Signed) '"James M. Phillippo, Pastor.
William Hale,
Wm. Albany Norman,
Thomas Gale,
Henry Madisson,
Joseph M'Culloch."' } Deacons.

OBITUARY NOTICES OF THE PUBLIC PRESS.

We are unwilling to omit some of the eloquent tributes to Mr. Sturge's character which appeared in the public press, especially of Birmingham and its neighbourhood:—

Birmingham Daily Post.

'The historic men of the last generation are rapidly disappearing in Birmingham. Last week Thomas Clutton Salt passed away from amongst us; to-day we have to record the death of Joseph Sturge. The sad event took place very unexpectedly on Saturday morning at his residence, Wheeley's Road, Edgbaston. As the intelligence spread throughout the

town during the day, the feeling seemed to be general that in losing Joseph Sturge Birmingham had lost one of its most honoured citizens. Nearly a quarter of a century ago, Mr. Wm. Redfern, in a letter to Thomas Attwood, spoke of Mr. Sturge as being "distinguished by a noble simplicity of character, a pure and untiring philanthropy, and the steadiest and most uncompromising devotion to principle." The rising generation know very little of the course of conduct which gained their townsman so enviable a position before he had passed the meridian of manhood; but they probably are to some extent aware that since then Mr. Sturge's life has been one long constant endeavour to benefit his fellow-men. No one was more addicted to "doing good by stealth;" and as to his "blushing to find it fame," it was sometimes amusing to see how the good man fidgeted about and actually writhed under the infliction of having his benevolence trumpeted forth at a public meeting by some well-meaning admirer. As we believe his charities and schemes of philanthropy were chiefly dictated by his strong sense of personal responsibility, it is not for us, even if we could, to attempt to chronicle them here.

'Mr. Sturge's character may be very briefly summed up. He was a rare specimen of the Christian man of the world. While attending rigidly to business, he so systematised it that he had always time for the service of other people, and was constantly equal to the task of fulfilling, on the instant, each duty of life as it arose. When a deed of mercy was to be done, self was the last consideration that presented itself; and that square head of his, with its stern pent-house eyebrows, and the kindly eye beneath, betokened a man to whom no second appeal on behalf of the down-trodden was necessary. His fine, simple, Puritan-like aspect and bearing always suggested that if he had lived in the days of Cromwell, sword and Bible would have been both well used by him; while his general character might have suggested to Tennyson the lines —

"'Howe'er it be, it seems to me
'Tis only noble to be good;
Kind words are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.'"

THE BIRMINGHAM JOURNAL.

'At the present moment, when the imagination of men is vehemently excited by "the pomp and circumstance of glorious war," and awfully impressed by the expectation of terrible and world-shaking events, it is especially expedient for our thoughts to repose upon a life calm, simple, stedfast, fruitful, and beneficent as was that of the admirable citizen upon whom the grave has just closed. While men are contemplating with troubled and perplexed care the strange career and portentous greatness of that foremost man of all the world, the Emperor of the French, and are eagerly looking forward to the manifestation of rare military genius and supreme destructive capacity in him, or in some French or Italian officer hitherto unknown, we cannot do better than ponder awhile over the character of the eminent English philanthropist, of the devoted champion of peace, who shed upon this town the lustre of his truly Christian life, and his truly national reputation.

'Mr. Sturge was one of those characters which it seems given to England alone to produce and appreciate; one of those public men whose might is in their sense of right, whose powerful voice is altogether governed by their scrupulous and tender conscience, who, when they have once taken up a cause, never lay it down, but cleave to it through evil report and good report; who could work for it with a multitude; who could work for it alone; whom public disapproval does not dishearten; whom public applause does not enervate. Conscientious, benevolent, devout, intent upon obeying his conscience, helping his race, and serving his God, he pursued these high ends untiringly, both in retirement and before the world. Altogether untainted by vanity or ambition, he was no less free from morbid modesty and disabling fastidiousness. When good was to be done in secret, no man's left hand was more unaware of the beneficence of his right hand; when a cause had to be publicly upheld, no one could assume a prominent position with more simplicity, or sustain it with

more dignity and firmness, careless of small cavillers and mean disparagers.

'Capable alike of directing the good dispositions, or resisting what he held to be the evil inclinations of his countrymen, he had the opportunity, on the two most prominent occasions of his life, of manifesting both these high capacities. As the champion of the slaves he commanded the sympathy of England, as the champion of peace he offended her patriotic susceptibility; as the hastener of negro emancipation he succeeded, as the deprecator of the Russian war he failed. His visit to the West Indies was hailed as a deed of heroism; his journey to St. Petersburgh was characterised as a piece of ostentatious meddling; but the unavailing visit was undertaken in the same spirit of love to God and man which had inspired the successful journey; and Mr. Sturge as little repented of the one as of the other.

'No man ever led a life more harmonious, more of a piece with itself. All his powers were under the absolute command of conscience; his smallest sayings and doings, his very outgoings and incomings, were inspired by the voice of principle, the sense of duty. The journeys were not acts of self-indulgence, but expressions of principle; he travelled not in quest of pleasure, but in fulfilment of duty. He visited the West Indies, he explored Schleswig Holstein, he sought St. Petersburgh, not to improve his health, to cheer his spirits, to vary his enjoyments, to refine his taste, or even to widen his intellect, but to serve his race and to glorify his God. With him authorship was not a quest of fame, but a service of duty; he wrote books not to advance his own reputation, but to advance a good cause. It is not a little pleasing to reflect upon the esteem and honour that followed this servant of principle and of duty. No inhabitant of this town had so wide and noble a reputation, so high and national a position. Few living Englishmen were more widely esteemed and more deeply honoured, as no living or departed Englishman was more eminently distinguished by intense conscientiousness, practical benevolence, and vital godliness.'

ARIS'S GAZETTE. (Conservative paper.)

'Although Mr. Sturge held strongly pronounced opinions generally at variance with those of the majority of his countrymen, it would be difficult to say whether he was more respected by his opponents or his friends. The perfect simplicity of his character, his high honour, his sterling honesty in every relation of public and private life, and his readiness to concede to others the same freedom of action and the same purity of motive that he claimed for himself, all contributed to ensure him the respect and regard of every person who knew him. This sentiment of regard his generous beneficence deepened into attachment. His ear was never deaf nor his hand closed against any tale of distress; but not a tithe of his benefactions is known to the world, for, like all good men, he was much given in his charities to observe the Scriptural precept, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." To public charities and educational institutions he was a constant and liberal donor, and he was also a warm supporter of those religious objects to which his principles, as a member of the Society of Friends, allowed him to contribute. If our space permitted, we could say much more of one, the half of whose virtues will never become known, but whose kindly nature was widely and warmly appreciated even by those who knew little of him, and whose quick active step, cheerful voice, and genial smile, will long be missed by those amongst whom his busy, useful, self-denying life was passed.'

BIRMINGHAM TIMES.

'When men of mark pass away from amongst us some special notice is called for. We have to chronicle the death of a man well known to everybody for his active benevolence, and the important position he has occupied in the town of Birmingham. We refer to Mr. Joseph Sturge, a man of broad philanthropy, of generous sentiments, of comprehensive politics, and cosmopolitan sympathies. Early on Saturday morning last, his health having failed him somewhat for a

few months past, he rendered up his spirit to the God who gave it, surrounded by his medical attendants and his affectionate family. A serious fit of coughing seemed to affect the heart, and soon after seven o'clock he expired in his own apartment.

> "The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
> Is privileged beyond the common walks
> Of virtuous life, quite on the verge of heaven."

The general feeling in the town is one of deep sorrow for his loss, and of strong sympathy with his family in their heavy bereavement. In all the relations of life Mr. Joseph Sturge was exemplary; an honoured citizen, a faithful friend, an affectionate husband, a kind father, a shrewd, practical, clever, business man, a liberal, broad-souled politician, a generous benefactor to the poor, a powerful advocate of temperance, and a living example of what is understood by a really good and virtuous man. Uncompromising in principle, modest in doing deeds that honoured his humanity, simple in a child-like degree and free from duplicity as a lamb, fearful of having his name or his fame blazoned to the world, and persevering in works of pure and unsectarian benevolence, charity, and philanthropy, he lived a life of kindliness and good-will to man, and "his works will follow him." "His works of faith and his labours of love" have cheered many a lone and comfortless heart, have aroused many a depressed and sunken spirit, have evolved many a latent and dormant energy, have "blessed many a sad fire-side," and cast a gleam of heaven's own sunshine on many a dark and desolate spot. He was the type of a true Christian, and finished a life of ceaseless activity in the cause of his Master with peace and serenity. A man of purer faith, possessing a deeper sense of his responsibility to God, a greater lover of freedom, and a firmer friend to the working classes, we do not believe remains amongst us. He was a great man as well as a good man, and his name will long be remembered, not only in Birmingham, but in Christendom, as a powerful advocate for free institutions, as a stern opponent of war and

bloodshed, and as a true friend to liberty and humanity. His life should inculcate a great moral lesson; for the

> "Lives of great men all remind us,
> We should make our lives sublime,
> And departing leave behind us
> Footprints on the sands of time."'

THE STAFFORDSHIRE SENTINEL.

'On Saturday last died Mr. Joseph Sturge. While professors of religion, that way inclined, may dispute whether the Duke of Leeds died a member of the Church of England or the Church of Rome, none who knew him will doubt that the former died a member of the Church of Christ—which is composed of the truly Evangelical believers of all churches—but the faithless professors of none. Other columns contain the impression of various good men as to Mr. Sturge's character and usefulness. He leaves behind him few equal—we believe none superior to himself—for all which constituted, in spirit, utterance, and action, a true Christian in all the relations of life. As he lived, death could not find him unprepared. It has been our lot to meet him frequently in connection with various of the good objects to which his life was consecrated; and to listen to his words. If he were not gifted with fervid eloquence, or a glib utterance, we have often been struck with the ripeness of his wisdom, the comprehensiveness of his views, the direct way in which he went at once to the heart of a subject, the suavity, the simplicity, and firmness with which he ever held to his principles, and the fewness, plainness, and force of the words which he employed in conveying his thoughts, wishes, and purposes to others. Humble, generous, wise, patient, loving—ever developing, in consonant modes, a life, the springs of which were divine—we knew no one who unconsciously drew more largely on the love, trust, and admiration of his fellows, and for whom it was so little needed for them to make the allowances ordinarily exacted by and usually conceded to the infirmities of our common nature. Every clime and every class are debtors to him; and multitudes of hearts—all between those of the most ignorant,

orphan outcasts, and those of persons the most exalted by wealth, rank, connection, learning, wisdom, and piety included —echo his loss.

'It was but the other day that he stood amongst us—commending even more by his spirit and bearing, than by his words, great principles of action and objects of pursuit with such effect, that his death will probably quicken the thoughts and activities, stimulate the sluggishness and rebuke the asperities of many who wished, while they listened to him, that they could always live and act under the influence of that hour. He knew how to suffer disappointment without mortification; he knew how to labour and endure without impatience; he knew how to be charitable to the erring without complicity in their criminality; to achieve success without pride; and how to be praised without manifesting vanity.'

THE MANCHESTER EXAMINER AND TIMES.

'We cannot allow such an event as the death of Mr. Joseph Sturge to pass away from the public mind without paying our tribute of sorrow and admiration to the memory of one of the best and noblest-hearted Englishmen of the present age. The motives which actuated him during a long career of unwearied benevolence were of a kind which few, perhaps, could adequately appreciate. The feelings of most men whose lot is cast among the world's thickest turmoil are apt to get hard and dissonant, and happy indeed may we count him who is able to keep the cords of sympathy within his bosom untangled and unjarred. Whether by temperament, by education, or by strenuous self-discipline, Mr. Sturge succeeded in this rare task. While he took the keenest interest in the events which were passing around him, while no instance of human suffering could be too obscure or too remote to catch his eager eye, and while, at the call of duty, he never shrank from any degree of publicity which the occasion fairly required, his private life was passed in the tranquil atmosphere of piety, out of which he came, single-minded and lion-hearted as an apostle, to do his allotted

work. He brought into public life the sentiments and habits of a recluse. He nourished his soul on those fair pastures which lie far above the common haunts of men, at the base of the everlasting hills. Those mystic tendencies which, in other men or in another age, would have run to seed in useless meditation, quickened by his love of humankind, and matured by his practical instincts, yielded in his case the richest and most seasonable fruit. Quiet and contemplative as an ascetic, he was also ardent and chivalrous as a crusader. A profound sense of religious obligation made him calm, strong, and fearless. The approval of his conscience raised him immeasurably above the world's ridicule. He cared not one jot for the loudest hurricane of fool's laughter. Sceptics and foplings might deride what they were so utterly incompetent to comprehend; he heeded not their antics. Striving always to be true to God and to himself, he found in a sense of duty, fulfilled according to the utmost limits of his capacity, the only reward he ever courted, and from the secret shrine where the saint presented his life-long homage, the man and the citizen went forth to do service for the world.

'For the admirers of moral prowess, we need not claim on behalf of Mr. Sturge a high place among the great men of the age which is just closing. The history of that period would be incomplete without his name. There is scarcely any important movement for promoting the welfare of his fellow-countrymen, or of mankind, which has been prosecuted during the last forty years, in which he has not taken a prominent part. He battled for the emancipation of the slaves in the British colonies. When apprenticeship was substituted for slavery, he was the first to expose the insidious nature of that arrangement. At his own cost he undertook a journey to the West Indies for the purpose of investigating the facts of the case, and the disclosures he made on his return were the principal means of putting an end to the scandalous compact by which the slaveholder got twenty millions of money, and yet kept possession of his human chattels. Unlike some philanthropists, his zeal on behalf of distant objects did not blind him to the necessities of his own countrymen.

He had no ambition to take rank as a political agitator, but when the working classes were in danger of being led astray by unwise counsels, he stepped forward at once as the advocate of their political rights, and the denouncer of the folly and wickedness of attempting to win those rights by physical force. On one occasion, when the Birmingham Bull-ring was filled with excited crowds, and the troops were ready to fire upon them, his calm and friendly counsels prevented a collision. When the famine raged in Ireland, no man in the three kingdoms exerted himself more assiduously in rendering relief. It is well known that his strongest sympathies were engaged on behalf of the "peace movement." He belonged to a denomination of Christians who, without descending to perplexing subtleties, are content to denounce all war as opposed to the spirit of the Gospel, and who, instead of waiting for the realisation of their objects till mankind in general shall have attained to a stage of ideal perfection, have the inexplicable audacity to go straight to the point at once. It is easy to reduce the abstract peace doctrine to a seeming absurdity, and to charge this absurdity upon those who hold it. Practically they differ from their critics only in adhering more tenaciously to the simple precepts of the Gospel, to the pure dictates of humanity, and by pursuing this course they have rendered incalculable service to the best interests of the world. People don't always know their benefactors. There were many wise men in the days of George Fox, but the intuitions of the devout dreamer have done quite as much as the statecraft of his contemporaries to leaven permanently the mind and heart of England. Mr. Sturge was one of the noblest of the race of heroes who have descended from the loins of their founder. His philanthropy was a sentiment, the offshoot of a beneficent creed, which lived in action. When the war was raging in Denmark, he went straight to the field of battle on the errand of the peacemaker; and when a bloodier conflict was on the eve of commencing, while statesmen were busy with their notes and protocols, he, along with others, repaired to St. Petersburgh, had an interview with the Emperor Nicholas, and

strove to win the autocrat to pacific counsels. They failed—how and to what extent it were very bootless now to enquire—and were of course laughed at by those who measure greatness by success, and whose notions of international negotiation are inseparable from diplomatic lace and livery.

'Thus living, thus humbly and zealously working for the welfare of mankind, the good man has reached the goal, and now rests from his labours. The fiery chariot has caught him up at last, and we know not upon whom his mantle has descended. Happy in his death as he had been useful in his life, he was spared the dreary and painful interval which is usually interposed between the hour of midday toil and the eventide of rest. The summons was sudden and peremptory—one hour in apparent health, the next hour all the care and reckoning of this life finished. People's thoughts are now employed in contemplating events of a far more exciting character. We can but just hope that one word of sorrowful parting will be heard above the martial din which fills all ears, and the pomp and circumstance of glorious war which occupies all eyes. Two emperors are hastening to measure their swords in mortal strife—two great men, very great according to all vernacular computations, are about to vindicate their reverence for human nature and their love of human freedom by dooming thousands of unoffending men to slaughter. Heaven attend them with what inscrutable benisons it shall deem best on their bloody way, but better is an ounce of goodness than a universe of glory.'

The Morning Star.

'It is not well that so much excellence should be allowed to pass away from the earth without some attempt being made to fix the eyes of men upon it for a moment in reverence and love, dazzled as we are apt to be by far other kinds of heroisms and celebrities. It is no exaggeration to say that the loss of such a man is a national loss; for he was one of the truest of patriots, one of the most generous of philanthropists, one of the finest instances that our age has

witnessed of a consistent practical Christian. His life was one of continued well-doing. As the foe of slavery, as the friend of peace, as the promoter of temperance and education, as the ready and munificent abettor of innumerable schemes of benevolence both local and general, his name must ever stand on honourable record. He possessed the rarest combination we ever met of gentleness and firmness, presenting in his own person a living refutation of the theory of those who seem to imagine there can be no strength of character without violence and harshness. A kinder and more genial nature, a spirit more tenderly alive to all the finest impulses of humanity, never breathed. His life, indeed—

"Was one full stream of love from font to sea."

His pecuniary benefactions, though princely both in amount and variety, formed the least part of his charity. What most marked his career was his incessant personal exertions for the benefit of others. He was never happy but when engaged in some pursuit having for its object the welfare of the race; and by the natural ardour of his character, and his extraordinary capacity for labour, he was really able to compress the activities of several lives into one. But united with this benevolent temper was an energy of will, a courageous resoluteness of purpose that no difficulty could daunt, no amount of labour or sacrifice could turn aside. Let his conscience only be once persuaded that a thing was right to be done or attempted, and he was not to be deterred from the effort, however little in accordance with the world's conventionalisms, even though obstacles innumerable stood in the way, and "though," as John Forster has it, "a whole neighbourhood of fools were to laugh in chorus."'

THE NEW YORK EVENING POST.

'In the removal of this eminent philanthropist to a better world, his native land has been deprived of one of its best men, and it may be said without exaggeration that the world is a loser by this sad event. Though his affections were strongly centred in a happy home and congenial circle, yet

they embraced the kingdom and extended to all men. He might have said, Wherever there is human want to relieve, there is my country.

'Though so largely engaged in business transactions, he devoted much of his time and large portions of his wealth to objects of private and general benevolence. He did this unostentatiously but perseveringly, and his benevolent efforts took a wide range. His sympathies were especially with the poor, the enslaved, and all who needed a helper. Among numberless other forms of benevolence, on many occasions has he helped poor youths and adults, in whose future good conduct he had confidence, to emigrate to this country, where they could commence anew without suspicion or hindrance, confiding them to the oversight of some one who was fully and confidentially apprised of their past career. Meritorious persons of various kinds have experienced aid from Mr. Sturge in coming to this country with a view to better their condition; indeed his liberality, kindness and solicitude, in these regards, were extraordinary.

'Mr. Sturge was a great man because he was a good man. He had rare personal advantages, and a happy combination of excellences. Nature and grace had combined to give the world in him assurance of a man. In the language of the poet Whittier, with reference to him:—

> "Unlearned, unknown to lettered fame,
> Yet on the lips of England's poor—
> And toiling millions, dwelt his name,
> With blessings evermore.
> Unknown to power or place, yet where
> The sun looks o'er the Carib sea,
> It blended with the freeman's prayer
> And song of jubilee."

'Joseph Sturge was a man of a remarkably healthy appearance; about the middle height, and stout. His temperament was cheerful; his countenance, especially his sweet smile, indicative of a heart full of benevolence; his sonorous voice and winning manners charmed all who approached him; he had constitutional diffidence mingled with self-respect; he had deference for good men, but was not in

the least awed in the presence of the titled or powerful; he condescended to men of low estate, despised caste and all the aristocratic assumptions of men, never sinking his manhood before wealth or position or arrogating to himself superiority before the lowly and despised; he had a strong sense of justice, integrity, honour; his reverence of the Supreme Being was profound; he respected manhood in all conditions of society; and, to sum up all, he was, to use the language of the Apostle Paul, "A lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate."'

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